

# Caribbean Council Newsletter

30 October 2009  
Issue 93



*your window to the Caribbean*



## Cuba Investment Seminar 9am – 1030am, 11 November, London

The Cuba Initiative is holding an investment seminar with the Cuban Minister for Tourism, Manuel Marrero Cruz.

The seminar will also hear from:

- Eulalia Llopiz, the president of Gran Caribe, the hotel company
- Lester Felipe Oliva, the president of Cubatur, ground-handlers associated with the UK Market
- Alfonso Llamas, the president of Viajes Cubanacan, ground-handlers associated with the UK Market
- Jose Manuel Bisbe, Commercial Director in the Ministry of Tourism

Following an introduction by the Cuba Initiative, Minister Marrero will lead a discussion in which the following topics will be considered:

- How has the global economic crisis affected the Cuban tourism industry?
- What are the current market and investment opportunities for UK companies?
- What are the Cuban Government's current priorities for the tourism sector?

Businesses attending will have an opportunity to introduce their company, to explain their presence or interest in business in Cuba and ask any questions.

For further details on the event, please contact Stephanie Whittle [stephanie.whittle@caribbean-council.org](mailto:stephanie.whittle@caribbean-council.org).



## Jamaica Tourism Investment Forum 11 November, 2009, London

Jamaica Trade and Invest, European Regional Office (JTI) will be hosting the second *Jamaica Tourism Investment Forum*, on Wednesday 11 November 2009, at the Novotel London ExCeL. The event seeks to build upon Jamaica's strong tourism sector and the Government's inward investment programmes.

The event will be attended by major European hotel and attractions developers, financiers and operators as well as companies specializing in public/private tourism infrastructural projects. This is an opportunity for delegates to interact with stakeholders and principal decision makers from Jamaica.

The event will take place between 9.00 am and 12.30 pm and will include a forum chaired by the Jamaican High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Burchell Whiteman, and a presentation from Jamaican Minister of Tourism the Honourable Edmund Bartlett (pictured).

The forum will be followed by a Roundtable session which will address procedural and regulatory issues applicable to investors. Alec Sanguinetti, Director General of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association – the region's largest private sector association – will also speak at the event, along with David Jessop, Executive Director of the Caribbean Council.

Any CBBC members interested in attending the Jamaica Tourism Investment Forum should contact Stephanie Whittle [stephanie.whittle@caribbean-council.org](mailto:stephanie.whittle@caribbean-council.org)



## Caribbean Council Director Awarded Jamaican Honour

The Executive Director of the Caribbean Council, David Jessop, has been awarded an honorary Order of Distinction (Commander Class) by the Government of Jamaica for service to Jamaica and the Jamaican Diaspora. Mr Jessop, who has headed the Caribbean Council for the past 15 years, has worked with the Caribbean region for more than 35 years.

## Events Diary

2-6 November, 2009  
BCSI Trade Mission to UK

11 November, 2009  
Cuba Investment Seminar, London

11 November, 2009  
Jamaica Investment Seminar,  
London

12 November, 2009  
Invest SVG Reception, London

16-20 November, 2009  
Trade Mission to Jamaica

2-7 November, 2009  
Havana International Fair, Cuba

23-26 November, 2009  
Commonwealth Business Forum,  
Port of Spain, Trinidad

26-27 November, 2009  
Cuba's Energy Revolution Seminar,  
Havana, Cuba

4-6 May, 2010  
Caribbean Hotel and Tourism  
Investment Conference, Puerto Rico

*For information on any of the above  
events please contact*

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## Caribbean Air Passenger Duty lobby grows

Caribbean Governments and the Caribbean Diaspora in the UK continue to lobby against the Air Passenger Duty banding system introduced on all flights departing the United Kingdom.

On November 1, the British Government introduced a banding system for the tax which had previously been at a flat rate for all destinations. The new measures designate the Caribbean as being in band C but the whole of the US including Hawaii in the lower tax band B; a move the Caribbean and its Diaspora in the UK believe to be discriminatory.

The tax has particularly angered the Caribbean community in the United Kingdom so much so that activists in Britain now believe that the banding for the Caribbean is potentially a UK electoral issue in the usually marginal seats in which the community reside. They see the measure as unjust and are writing to their members of Parliament asking to know their position on the issue in the run up to a general election expected in May of 2010.

The latest development has come in the form of an answer to a Parliamentary question. On October 12 in the House of Lords, the Treasury spokesman, Lord Myners, indicated that while the British Government would not review the overall tax or its banding based approach, it was continuing to look at a possible exception for the Caribbean and this was being considered as part of a review of APD due to be published very soon.

In the meantime, Caribbean Governments have continued to make representations about the negative impact the tax will have on the regional economy at a time of falling visitor arrivals.

The Caribbean Tourism Organisation is continuing its campaign against APD. It has urged travel industry representatives and members of the Caribbean community in the UK to write to their local MP on the issue. They have published a draft letter on their website <http://www.caribbean.co.uk/apd/Update.aspx>. The CTO is also coordinating a range of meetings with Caribbean Tourism Ministers scheduled to take place during World Travel Market 9-12 November.

A petition was handed to the Treasury on 27 October and meetings are to be co-ordinated with Parliamentarians, Ministers and the opposition parties during the week of World Travel Market in London to enable Caribbean Governments to express their concern

The Daily Telegraph has also launched on 30 October an anti APD Campaign <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/travelnews/air-passenger-duty/6459706/Air-Passenger-Duty-APD-campaign-the-Telegraphs-petition-to-stop-the-tax-on-travel.html> and coalitions of Service Industries across the Caribbean have also written to the Treasury and others in the UK about the revised banding for the tax, which they say contradicts the spirit of the EU CARIFORUM Economic Partnership Agreement (the EPA) that was signed in October 2008.



## Participating in Cuba's Energy Revolution: A Seminar for the UK Energy Sector 26-27 November, 2009, Havana, Cuba

The Cuba Initiative is organizing a renewable energy seminar in Havana at the end of November, providing UK companies with the opportunity to showcase their services / products to a high level audience in Cuba. The event will be co-hosted by the Cuba Initiative and with the Cuban Ministry of Basic Industries.

Participants from the Cuban side will be senior figures in the energy and renewable energy sectors who are members of the 15 National Working Groups which are responsible for developing Cuban energy policy.

The Cuban Government has indicated that they would welcome entering into commercial discussions with UK firms in the renewable energy sector. They have expressed a particular interest in the following areas: Biomass from sugar cane; Forest biomass; biogas from organic residues from agriculture and cattle; thermal; solar; wind power; and hydro energy. They are also interested in exploring possible financing solutions for renewable energy projects and about carbon trading and carbon emissions licensing.

Invitations and further information have been sent to members of the Cuba Initiative and companies operating in the energy sector.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Chris Bennett [chris.bennett@caribbean-council.org](mailto:chris.bennett@caribbean-council.org)

## Barbados Coalition of Service Industries Business Mission 2-6 November, 2009

The Barbados Coalition of Service Industries (BCSI) is leading a business mission to the UK from 2-6 November.

Companies participating in the mission include those working in the following sectors:

- Fashion Couture and Craft products businesses
- Publishers
- Technology Businesses.
- Property and property services companies
- Theatre film media and arts businesses.
- Travel and Tourism businesses.

The group is looking to open discussions with potential business partners.

The Delegation will be in Birmingham on 2 and 3 November and in London on 4 and 5. They will be in Croydon on Friday 6 November.

There are a number of networking receptions and the team will be available for business discussions each day. All CBBC members are invited to attend the receptions, which are taking place as follows:

2 November, Jurys Inn, Birmingham

4 November, Barbados High Commission, London

6 November, Croydon Park Hotel, Croydon

Anyone interested in meeting the group should contact John Gavin [john.gavin@g4h.co.uk](mailto:john.gavin@g4h.co.uk) or call 07764963764.



**Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Trade and Investment Networking Event**  
**5.30pm – 8pm, 12 November, High Commission for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, 10 Kensington Court, London, W8 5DL**

Invest SVG, the investment promotions agency for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, is holding a networking reception at the High Commission in London on 12 November. The delegation, led by its Executive Director Cleo Huggins, is keen to discuss the trade and investment opportunities in St Vincent and the Grenadines with UK companies.

All CBBC members are invited to attend the event. For further information please contact Carolin de Freitas-Sawh [info@svghighcom.co.uk](mailto:info@svghighcom.co.uk) or Gus Franklyn-Bute [gus.vijan@gmail.com](mailto:gus.vijan@gmail.com).

**Commonwealth Business Forum to Feature Doing Business in the Caribbean**  
**November 25, 2009, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago**

Taking place in Trinidad and Tobago during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, the Commonwealth Business Forum agenda features a plenary session titled 'Caribbean: A Place to do Business'. The session will focus on the main incentives, challenges and prospects for business and investment in the region and will include information about the experiences of investors currently doing business in this region.

The speakers for the session are Prof Compton Bourne, President, Caribbean Development Bank; Edwin W Carrington, Secretary General, Caribbean Community (CARICOM); Dr Juan José Daboub, Managing Director, World Bank; Leonel Fernandez, President, Dominican Republic; and Dr Denzil Llewellyn Douglas, Prime Minister, St Christopher (St Kitts) & Nevis. To see a copy of the latest programme and to book your place, please click the links below. For further information please contact Vasundhara Puri [vasundhara.puri@cbcglobal.org](mailto:vasundhara.puri@cbcglobal.org).