



# **REPORT OF THE REGIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON SERVICES**



**PATRON:**

The Honourable Baldwin Spencer  
Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda  
and  
Lead CARICOM Head of Government  
with Responsibility for Service in the  
CSME

**VENUE AND DATE:**

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## **ACRONYMS**

AECID	-	Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development
BCSI	-	Barbados Coalition of Service Industries
CAIC	-	Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce
CASSOS	-	Caribbean Aviation Safety and Security Oversight System
CCH	-	Caribbean Cooperation in Health Programme
CCL	-	Caribbean Copyright Link
CENRMPF	-	Community Environment and Natural Resource Management Policy Framework
CHA	-	Caribbean Hotel Association
CIC	-	CARICOM Investment Code
CSME	-	CARICOM Single Market and Economy
CTO	-	Caribbean Tourism Organisation
CVQs	-	CARICOM Vocational Qualifications
DFID	-	United Kingdom Department for International Development
EPA	-	Economic Partnership Agreement
FCCA	-	Florida Caribbean Cruise Association
FDI	-	Foreign Direct Investment
GATS	-	General Agreement on Trade in Services
GATT	-	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
HECORA	-	Health Care Organisers and Advisers
IAIS	-	International Association of Insurance Supervisors
IDB	-	Inter-American Development Bank
IFI	-	International Financial Institution
IPR	-	Intellectual Property Rights
IT	-	Information Technology
LSCI	-	Liner Shipping Connectivity Index
NIS	-	National Insurance Scheme
SVE	-	Small Vulnerable Economy
TRIPS	-	Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UNCTAD	-	Nations Conference for Trade and Development
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme

- UNESCO - United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation  
WTO - World Trade Organisation

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Services Sector is the largest sector of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), accounting for more than two-thirds of total employment, output and exports<sup>1</sup>. As at 2007, total output within the CSME was valued at US\$31.2 billion and the Services Sector contributed US\$20.2 billion or 64.8 per cent. With respect to employment, as at 2002, the total number of persons employed in the CSME was over 2.4 million with the services sector employing 1.5 million or 67 per cent.

Notwithstanding the significant economic contribution of this sector, the regional regime for Services is still in its formative stage and there is a lot of catching-up to do when compared with the goods regime. There is still no regional regime for Services as is the case for goods. Work is underway to establish the facilitating legislative and policy frameworks at the regional and national levels so as to promote the sustainable growth of the Sector. Three (3) essential components of this work are the development of a Regional Policy Strategic Plan, Regional Strategic Plan and a Plan of Action for the five-year period 2009-2014. These are to feed into the Strategic Plan for Regional of the CARICOM Single Economy, scheduled to be operational by 2015.

Some of the administrative arrangements have been put in place at the regional level to promote the development of the sector. These include the creation of the Regional Project Steering Committee on Services Negotiations and the creation of a portfolio for Services under a Quasi-Cabinet mechanism of Heads of Government handling the CSME matters. In this regard, the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda is the Lead Head of Government with responsibility for Services.

Within the past eighteen (18) months two (2) external shocks: the global financial crisis, and the slowing down of the world economy, have emerged. The pace of the above-mentioned work now needs to be accelerated and an integrated response implemented if the adverse effects of these two (2) shocks are to be minimised.

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<sup>1</sup> No data on Haiti are available; The Bahamas not included in the CSME.

## **The Symposium**

To chart the way forward, a Regional Symposium on Services was convened during the period 15-17 July 2009 in Antigua and Barbuda, under the aegis of the Honourable Baldwin Spencer, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda.

## **Objectives**

The Symposium had three (3) major objectives, namely -

- (i) **sensitise** the key stakeholders in the sector on how to capitalise on the Region's comparative advantage in the area of Services for the increased development of the Community;
- (ii) **develop** a Plan of Action for the period 2009-2014; and
- (iii) **give concrete expression** to the Services component of the Regional Strategic Plan for Development within the context of the CSME.

## **Participation**

Over one hundred and sixteen (116) visiting delegates met with twenty-five (25) local delegates during the three-day period of the Symposium. A List of Delegates attending the Meeting is set out at **Annex I**.

## **Sector Coverage**

All twelve (12) sub-sectors of the Services sector were covered at the Symposium.

## **Documentation**

Twenty-three (23) Concept Papers were commissioned for the following sub-sectors, namely -

- (i) Business Services -
  - (a) Professional Services;
  - (b) Computer and Related Services;
  - (c) Consultancy Services;
  
- (ii) Communication Services -
  - (a) Telecommunication Services;
  - (b) Postal and Courier Services;
  
- (iii) Construction Services;
  
- (iv) Distribution Services -
  - (a) Wholesale, Retail Trade, Commission Agents;
  - (b) Franchising;
  
- (v) Education Services -
  - (a) Primary and Secondary;
  - (b) Tertiary Education;
  - (c) Vocational Education;
  
- (vi) Environmental Services;

- (vii) Financial Services -
  - (a) Banking Services;
  - (b) Insurance Services;
  - (c) Securities Services;
  
- (viii) Health and Related Social Services;
  
- (ix) Tourism Services;
  
- (x) Entertainment, Cultural and Sporting Services -
  - (a) Entertainment Services/Cultural Industries;
  - (b) Sporting Services;
  
- (xi) Transport Services -
  - (a) Air Transport Services;
  - (b) Maritime Services;
  - (c) Road and Riverain Transport Services;
  
- (xii) Other Services -  
Business Support Services.

An additional Paper was commissioned on the Classification of Services, the Challenges and Opportunities for CARICOM Member States.

The Concept Papers were prepared based on stated guidelines and addressed the following issues –

- (i) Overview of the Regional Sub-Sector;

- (ii) The existing policy framework;
- (iii) Cross-sectoral linkages;
- (iv) Constraints; and
- (v) Recommendations for Developing the Regional Strategy for the Sub-Sector.

Each Paper outlined the elements of the regional strategy for each Sub-Sector and was subjected to critical analysis by industry specialists, academics, consumer representatives, and representatives of large, medium, and small firms operating in the Sub-Sector.

Copies of these Papers are available on the CARICOM website.

### **Treatment of Postal and Courier Services**

Due to the death of the father of the consultant who prepared the concept paper on postal services, consideration of the draft elements of the regional strategic plan for the sector was deferred. A workshop on postal and courier services was convened on 8 September 2010 under the auspices of the Caribbean postal union and CARIOM Secretariat. A full report of that meeting including the recommended elements for the strategic plan for that sector is found at **Annex II**.

### **FUNDING**

The United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provided the funding for both the preparatory work as well as the conduct of the Symposium.

### **PROGRAMME**

The Programme of the Symposium is at **Annex III**.

## 2. OPENING CEREMONY

The Symposium begun with the National Anthem of Antigua and Barbuda rendered by Ms. Henry of the Ministry of Trade.

The Welcome and Opening Remarks were given by the Master of Ceremonies Ambassador Colin Murdoch, Permanent Secretary, Trade, Ministry of Finance, Economy and Trade, Antigua and Barbuda. He highlighted the challenges of the compounded phenomena of the financial crisis and the global economic recession. He flagged that the economy of Antigua and Barbuda was very dependent on Services and that the private sector had a key role to play in its stabilization and recovery. He concluded that the symposium was therefore important and timely.

Pastor Martin then gave the opening prayer.

Mr. Lawrence Placide, Chairman of the Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services Industries gave a few remarks in behalf of the Private Sector. In his remarks, he argued that the CSME was expected to fuel the development of the private sector and that the pace of integration was a cause of concern. He stressed that the private sector fully supported the CSME and wanted to play a greater role. In this regard, he highlighted that the national service coalitions should be supported and that they could be funded using the proceeds from the registration of service providers. In regards to the expectations of the symposium, he opined that the Action Plan should be time-bound, measurable and targeted. A copy of these remarks is at **Annex IV**.

His Excellency Dr. Edwin Carrington, Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community gave some brief remarks. He made reference to the study done by Daniel P. Erickson – Beyond Tourism- which inter alia, outlined a road map with Services playing a critical role. He suggested that an implementation deficit was the Achilles heel of the Community. He opined that the development of the services sector offers many opportunities for regional consultants to make a contribution to regional development.

He stressed that they must be more proactive in seeking out these opportunities when they are advertised in the various media. A copy of these remarks is at **Annex V**.

The Hon. Baldwin Spencer, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda and Lead Head of Government with responsibility for Services in the CSME, gave the Feature Address. He highlighted the fact that due to the current financial crisis and global economic recession, the context in which he had proposed to convene the Symposium had changed and although it was a difficult situation, the Region had shown that it had the capacity to successfully confront these challenges. He also highlighted the trail illuminated by the founding fathers of the Community including the Honourable Vere Conrad Bird, Snr. He expressed his full confidence in receiving robust recommendations given that the right mix of skilled, experienced and dedicated regional stakeholders were meeting to identify the Elements of the Regional Strategic Plan for Services. The text of the Prime Minister's speech is at **Annex VI**.

## **Plenary Session One – Services, Trade and Development**

Chairperson: Ms. Desiree Field-Ridley

Adviser, Single Market and Sectoral Programmes  
CARICOM Secretariat

Presentations were made by -

- (i) Amb. Irwin LaRocque, Assistant Secretary-General, Trade and Economic Integration, CARICOM Secretariat – **Services in the CARICOM Single Market and Economy and a Regional Strategic Plan for Development.** Amb. LaRocque indicated that CARICOM Member States were seeking to have the CSME in place within four years. He argued that the integration movement was now strengthened through institutions such as the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ). He highlighted the main provisions for Services under the Revised Treaty and cautioned that more work was still needed to make these provisions operational and effective. He flagged the initiatives underway to engage the private sector, including the creation of the Caribbean Business Council. He also highlighted the Single Development Vision which sought to usher in the Single Economy and the completion of the CSME by 2015. **(See Annex VII).**
  
- (ii) Mrs. Martine Julsaint-Kidane of the Trade Negotiations and Commercial Diplomacy Branch, Division on International Trade and Commodities, United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) - **Strategies for the Development of the Services Sector to Engage in the Liberalised International Economy.** Mrs. Julsaint-Kidane highlighted the relationship between the Millennium Development Goals, trade and economic development. She also highlighted the linkages among the agricultural, manufacturing and services sectors of the economy, stressing that there were supply capacity constraints which could be strengthened through regional trade agreements, such as CARICOM. She flagged some of the work done by UNCTAD such as

its Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Programmes (JITAP), Product and Services Sector Strategies and National Services Policy Reviews. **See Annex VIII).**

- (iii) Ms Allyson Francis, Consultant and Trade Policy Adviser, Government of Grenada - **The Services Component of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)**. Ms. Francis flagged that the EPA fostered asymmetric liberalisation in favour of the CARIFORUM Party. She opined that there was an urgent need to implement the CSME if CARICOM Member States are to take advantage of the EPA. The main features of the EPA were highlighted including the Cooperation Agreement which provided for technical assistance , training and capacity building.**(See Annex IX).**
  
- (iv) Ms. Michelle Hustler, Programme Manager, Barbados Coalition of Service Industries (BCSI) - **The Role of the National Coalition in the Development of the Services Sector**. Ms. Hustler highlighted the strengths of the coalitions including raising the profile of the services sector in Member States. She also flagged the needs of the coalitions including (i) financial support; (ii) a champion; (iii) public sector support; and regional support.**(See Annex X).**

## **Discussions**

The ensuing discussions focused on how to get the Services component of the private sector ready to seize the emerging opportunities under the various trade agreements, including the CSME.

The **Barbados representative** informed the Meeting that given the pivotal role which the Services sector plays in national economy, a decision was taken by the Government of Barbados to treat the Barbados Coalition as a critical infrastructural input in the development and diversification of the sector, similar to the treatment given to the provision of water and electricity for the manufacturing sector.

The **Caribbean Export representative** opined that the time was ripe for the formation of the regional coalition. She advised that resources were available through Caribbean Export.

The **Saint Lucia Coalition of Service Industries** representative indicated that the coalition was funded under the STABEX programme and highlighted the need to make the coalition sustainable. She flagged the role of learning by doing, and advised that there was a need to consolidate the gains especially among the coalitions formed in the OECS before focusing resources on the formation of the regional coalition. This view was supported by the **St. Kitts and Nevis Coalition of Services Industries** and the **St. Vincent and the Grenadines Coalition of Service Industries** representatives.

The **Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Service Industries** representative argued that the private sector has the responsibility to move on its own. He highlighted that it was no point forming organizations for persons who do not need them. He suggested that the matter of sustainability cannot be dependent on donor support and that it must come from the private sector itself. He warned that the idea that the donor community prefers a single Caribbean entity may not be in the region's interest.

The **Barbados Coalition of Service Industries** representative advised that work had started on the formation of a regional coalition and that arrangements were made for a meeting of the various coalition representatives on the margins of the Symposium.

There was general consensus that the establishment and sustainability of National Services Coalitions and the proposed Regional Coalition of Services were necessary pre-conditions for the achievement of this goal.

It was noted that while some Member States had formed national coalitions, others had not yet been able to formalise such arrangements due to lack of capacity. Emphasis was therefore placed on support for those Member States that had been making slow progress which would delay the establishment of the regional coalition.

Non- coalition issues were also raised.

**Professor Tewarie** highlighted the position of UNESCO that education should not be treated as a commodity and the position of the WTO that education is a tradeable commodity and flagged that these divergent positions were a possible source of tension. He opined that UNCTAD's treatment of education appears to coincide with that of the WTO and sought clarification of the Region's position on this matter.

The **UNCTAD representative** suggested that it was for governments to decide if or not they will liberalise the education sector. She highlighted that some countries wanted the education sector opened up and had liberalise aspects of education services while other countries have not opened up the sector. She informed that UNCTAD assisted countries desirous of trading education services by providing information and technical support.

The **Jamaica representative** opined that crises tend to point to where countries ought to be or where they should have been. She argued that Services did not get the high level of attention that it deserved and now the Region needs to seize the opportunities offered by this sector. She flagged the following as areas in need of urgent attention:-

- Trade Promotion;
- Trade Facilitation;
- Engaging the Diaspora;
- The establishment of the Regional Services Coalition; and
- The identification and exploitation of all possible sources of funding for service sector development.

The **Antigua and Barbuda** representative flagged that the export development agencies of the region were oriented towards goods and there was a need to place more emphasis on Services. He also raised a matter with respect to the EPA, highlighting that four CARICOM Member States (Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, and St. Kitts and Nevis) have visa free arrangements with the EU, while the EU has visa free arrangement with all CARICOM Member States.

The **Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce** representative noted that the framework for the CVQs was well developed in Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago and queried whether arrangements were in place to assist these three Member States to replicate their models under component 200 of the CIDA project.

The lack of adequate management consulting services in the Region was raised in the context of the inability to get a consultant to undertake the Trade and Competitiveness Project. It was posited that in relation to donor funded projects, there was systemic discrimination against regional management consultants.

In concluding, the following suggestions were made -

- (i) Donor funding could be sought, especially for developing coalitions in the initial stages, and for supporting fledgling coalitions. The **Secretariat representative** informed the Meeting that it had raised the matter of funding with donor agencies and that they were not prepared to provide funds to meet the cost of staff for the coalitions. They were, however, more inclined to provide technical assistance. He also informed the meeting that Services had been placed on the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF Roadmap for funding especially the provision of support for private sector organisations. However, he cautioned that the drawdown of these funds would not be immediate.
- (ii) There was a call for governments to support their national coalitions as an investment in their national infrastructure. It was noted that the Government of Barbados sponsored the activities of the national coalition which was given oversight by a line ministry. The relationship was reciprocal where the coalition received financial support while it provided information to the government to assist in the conduct of negotiation of agreements. Some of the advantages which the coalition derived were not only financial support but institutional support, credibility as an organisation and support for advocacy of the organisation.

- (iii) The stronger, more established coalitions could assist the fledgling ones through functional cooperation arrangements.
- (iv) Stakeholders needed to find ways of supporting the coalitions in order to make them sustainable in the medium- and long-term.

The Meeting noted that the issue of sustainability was critical. The general consensus was that while donor funding and government support may be necessary in the initial stages of development of the coalitions, there was need to find a sustainable means of supporting the coalitions. Therefore private sector support and collaboration among national coalitions were necessary. Well established, sustainable national coalitions were a prerequisite for a vibrant regional coalition and therefore the focus should be on the development of coalitions at the national level.

## **Plenary Session Two – Regional Challenges and Opportunities Confronting Trade and Development in Services**

### **Presentation of the Concept Papers**

The Concept Papers were presented in the form of ten-minute PowerPoint Presentations and after each cluster of presentations, a maximum period of fifteen minutes was allowed for discussion. Independently, many of these Papers identified common constraints, needs and recommendations, and this allowed a natural clustering of these presentations. However, it should be noted that in some cases, the natural clusters was too cumbersome, and hence some presentations had to be placed within a cluster that did not foster perfect fitness. Copies of these concept papers can be found at [http://www.caricom.org/jsp/single\\_market/services\\_regime/services\\_symposium.jsp](http://www.caricom.org/jsp/single_market/services_regime/services_symposium.jsp)

Below is a brief Summary of the presentations.

### **Panel I**

- (i) Tourism Service;
  
- (ii) Transport Services -
  - (a) Air transport Services;
  - (b) Maritime Transport Services;
  - (c) Road and Riverain Transport Services.

*Moderator: Mr. George Goodwin,  
President, Antigua and Barbuda Chamber of Commerce*

(i) **TOURISM SERVICES**

Topic—Strategic Plan on Tourism Services in the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).

Author: Mr. Cecil Miller

**Mr. Miller** highlighted the existence of the “*Caribbean Sustainable Tourism Framework*” which was completed by the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO) in 2008. He contended that this document should be publicised and widely disseminated.

He argued that while the Caribbean tourism sector is globally competitive there is now a need for the industry to take the lead in terms of excellence and best practices.

Some attention was given to areas such as -

- (i) The development of the indigenous handicraft sector;
- (ii) The development, implementation and enforcement of standards;
- (iii) The negative impact of some external legislation such as the UK’s Air Passenger Duty; and
- (iv) The opportunities and challenges of new trade agreements: the need to attract European Hotel Brands was highlighted.;

Nine (9) concerns which had the potential to become constraints and nine (9) existing constraints which needed to be urgently addressed were identified. These can be categorised as -

1. Marketing –

- high concentration in source markets and the need to diversify into markets such as the Diaspora and India;
- weak indigenous investment;
- loss of market share in both long stay and cruise passengers;
- inadequate research and development and intelligence capability; and
- weak destination management, and the need to focus on standards and product market fitness;

2. Human and Social

- crime and violence
- the use of inexperienced foreign consultants to prepare Tourism Master Plans, Airline Capacity Studies, proposals for the promotion of standards; and proposals for the development of niche products;
- the impact of the FCCA in the Turks and Caicos Islands and Belize.

3. Product Development –

- Re-define the product
- Promote the Caribbean Look
- Diversify the Caribbean Brand

4. Sustainability – the continued illusiveness of the goal of providing and assessing dependable, affordable and adequate international and intra-regional air services.

Fourteen (14) pre-requisites for the growth and development of the sector were identified. These were summarised into four (4) broad categories -

- (i) **Developing** and **implementing** the supportive policy and legislative infrastructure to address the areas of marketing, Human Resource Development;
- (ii) **Improving** Research and Development, and intelligence;
- (iii) **Encouraging** the funding agencies to utilise more regional consultants in the development of the industry; and
- (iv) **Establishing** arrangements to facilitate the free movement of labour within the industry.

**Mr. Miller** recommended the following elements for the Regional Tourism Strategy -

- Product Development and Standards;
- Marketing – the Caribbean as a single destination;
- Research and Development;
- Working with air transport partners to secure efficient and adequate airlift;
- Encouraging greater Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and use pension funds and National Insurance Scheme (NIS) funds;
- Information Technology (IT);
- Creating centres of excellence in training; and
- Entrepreneurial Development.

**(ii) TRANSPORT SERVICES**

**(a) Air Transport Services**

Topic – Strategic Plan for Air Transport Services in CARICOM.

Author: Mr. Ian Bertrand of El Perial Management Services.

**Mr. Bertrand** identified six (6) characteristics of the Member States of the CSME which collectively determine its competitiveness –

- (i) Their small size and openness of their economies;
- (ii) Their separation by water;
- (iii) Their spread over a large geographical area when compared with their size;
- (iv) The vulnerability of their infrastructure to seasonal natural disasters;
- (v) Their heavy dependence on air transport in order to carry out their major economic activity (Tourism and Travel-related Services) and the maintenance of social and cultural cohesion in the Community;
- (vi) Their heavy dependence on extra-regional carriers in the provision of Tourism and Travel-related Services.

He contended that the CARICOM Transport Policy as outlined in the Revised Treaty should foster the development and consolidation of the CSME by providing adequate, safe and internationally competitive transport services.

A complex infrastructure of strategies and agreements existed to maintain the provision of tourism and travel-travel services. These included government ownership of airlines

which provide international services, government ownership of airlines which provide regional services and various models of “open skies” Air Services Agreements.

Citing an apparent disconnect between the development of air transport infrastructure and facilitation on the one hand and the development of the tourism product on the other hand, **Mr. Bertrand** made a call for an objective review of the Region’s tourism product. He also argued that the Regional Strategic Plan for Air Transport and the Regional Strategic Plan for Tourism should be organically linked and grounded in the Regional Review of the Tourism Product.

In his conceptual framework CARICOM was divided into three (3) sub-Regions, namely -

- The North West - Belize, The Bahamas, Haiti and Jamaica;
- The East - Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago; and
- South – Guyana and Suriname.

He noted that while there were five (5) regionally domiciled airlines and one commuter airline service there was no direct service linking these three (3) Sub-Regions although there was relatively good service between and within the South and the East. Further, that Barbuda, Dominica, Montserrat, Nevis, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines could not facilitate international air services.

He assessed the performance, profitability, competitiveness, governance, the international regulatory framework and its impact, the regional regulatory framework and its impact, and ability of these carriers to sustain the economic growth of the CSME, and concluded that in addition to servicing some non-economic routes on the basis of social conscience, they more unprofitable, poorly capitalised, and naturally constrained by lack

of economies of scale. He also proposed functional cooperation, strategic alliances and Hub and Spokes systems as means of addressing the constraint of economies of scale.

With respect to recommendation for the regional strategy for the air transport sector, **Mr. Bertrand** posited that the broad policy framework already existed but the difficulty lies in implementation and taking cohesive action. He recommended that -

- (i) Work on the Multilateral Air Services Agreement to bring it in line with the Revised Treaty and complete this as a matter of urgency;
- (ii) The decision-makers, shareholders and managers accept that the regional carriers must be profitable and competitive;
- (iii) The regional tourism product development be pursued concomitantly with air transport development;
- (iv) The human resources be strengthened especially in the areas of ICT, management, engineering and related technical skills;
- (v) Caribbean Aviation Safety and Security Oversight System (CASSOS) be mandated to provide technical training in key areas such as aviation security, air traffic control and safety oversight;
- (vi) Private equity investors and debt financiers be included as possible financing partners; and
- (vii) The Strategic Plan for Air Transport Services must speak to the pre-requisites for success.

**(b) Maritime Transport Services**

Topic – The Preparation of Strategic Plan on Maritime Transport Services For The CARICOM Single Market and Economy

Author: Mr. Fritz Pinnock.

**Mr. Pinnock** highlighted the dynamic trends in maritime/logistics sector in which the mix of specialisation, trade liberalisation, international transportation and technological advances fostered an environment where the right product was made available anywhere in the world at the right time and at the right price.

Against this background, he argued that the maritime sector of the CSME faced major challenges one of which was a lack of standards for labour practices and operational efficiency. He contended that this resulted in intra-island competition and global pressure.

He subdivided the ports of the CSME into three (3) categories, namely -

- (i) Global hub ports – the Kingston Container Terminal of Jamaica and Freeport of The Bahamas;
- (ii) Sub-regional hub ports – Kingston Wharves Limited of Jamaica; Point Lisas and Port-of-Spain of Trinidad and Tobago;
- (iii) Service ports – the remaining ports.

He showed that individually the CSME ports faced challenges in economies of scale due to low throughput and high costs which in turn constrained their modernisation and adoption of advances in technologies. A comparison was made between Jamaica and Singapore and it was argued that the former was affect by poor choice of container handling equipment.

Using UNCTAD's Liner Shipping Connectivity Index (LSCI), **Mr. Pinnock** presented an analysis of access of the ports of the CSME to world markets. The ports of the CSME were shown to have experienced a declining index between 2004 and 2008.

The case is also argued for the CSME to focus on the human resource opportunities in the maritime sector. It was contended that the maritime sector offered good employment opportunities and that the industry had to improve its perception among the youth of the Region.

A SWOT analysis highlighted two (2) strengths, eight (8) weaknesses, five (5) threats and four (4) opportunities, including the Region's proximity to North and South America, high berthing cost of cargo ships *vis-à-vis* cruise passenger liners, poor connectivity to global supply chain and the training of the Region's labour force in the area of ships officers respectively.

Based on the above a Sustainable Maritime Transport Strategy informed by inputs from consultations amongst all interest groups was proposed using the following -

- (i) **Raising** the profile of the industry where its vibrancy and economic significance was stressed;
- (ii) **Establishing** training institutions; and
- (iii) **Enacting** legislation to foster the environmental sustainability of both the Caribbean Sea and the maritime industry.

**(c) Road and Riverain Transport**

Topic – Road and Riverain Transport in the Caribbean Single Market and Economy

Author: Mr. Nigel Erskine

**Mr. Erskine** highlighted the role of the road and riverain transport sector in the economic growth and diversification of the economies of CARICOM Member States. He pin-pointed the fact that in terms of trade and development, the primary and secondary sectors heavily relied on the road and riverain transport system especially in Belize, Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

He argued that the Region's road and riverain transport sector needed improving especially in the areas of road habilitation and expansion. He posited that if this were done, the cost of transport, the loss of worker productivity due to time spent in congested traffic and the overall competitiveness of all sectors would be reduced and improved respectively.

Among his recommendations for the sector were -

- (i) **Policy:** Member States put in place road and riverain transport policies which sustain the achievements made and promote further improvements. These policies should address the issues of environmental impact, safety of people, the transport of hazardous waste, and weight control to mention a few.
- (ii) **Human Resource Requirements:** these included Civil Engineers, technicians for the design and supervision of new and rehabilitated road and riverain infrastructure and the wide spectrum of skilled and unskilled workers needed for the construction sector and the use of the infrastructure.
- (iii) **Access to and use of Technology and Innovation:** use of state of the art technology in the maintenance and expansion of road and riverain infrastructure.

- (iv) **Financing the sector's needs:** to be sourced from both public expenditure and private direct investment.
  
- (v) **Legislative framework:** make the necessary legislative amendments to improve the road and riverain transport of people and goods.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Tourism Services**

- (i) During the presentation on tourism, it was suggested that CARICOM countries could benefit from diversifying their markets into Asia and Africa. However, it was considered that a distinction should be made between targeting the Indian and Chinese diaspora as opposed to the residents of India and China, respectively. The suggestion was made that the Asian diaspora in North America could be targeted as a market for tourists. It was pointed out that there was a stronger association with the Indian diaspora because of a joint passion for cricket. Research on the Chinese market would need to be done. It was noted however, that 90 per cent of the tourist arrivals in India and China were from their respective Diasporas; and
  
- (ii) As a method of improving the tourism sector, it was strongly suggested that Caribbean countries follow the example of the Gulf States in focusing their branding on the product rather than marketing. It was further noted that the membership of the Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA) had been reduced in number and that it had to revert to meeting in Miami, rather than Puerto Rico thus depriving one of its membership of the opportunity to garner the revenue.

### **Air Transport Services**

- (i) The issue of functional cooperation among the three (3) airlines was raised in the context of the future of the Caribbean airline industry. It was noted that functional cooperation would not occur as it had a decade ago. Two (2) small airlines with diverse routes were unlikely to collaborate. Caribbean Airlines (CAL) had excess capacity on its Dash8 aircraft which were the same aircraft used by LIAT. However, a regional airline might not be profitable, and, in addition, Air Jamaica was reducing its services to focus on the most profitable routes;
- (ii) The view was expressed that the lack of collaboration between airlines stemmed from mistrust and insularity more than a financial motivation. Trust needed to be rebuilt among intra-regional airlines which were currently more comfortable doing business with extra-regional airlines than with each other; and
- (iii) The lack of follow-up and implementation of suggestions from previous meetings was lamented.

### **Maritime Transport**

Supporting training and standards within the shipping industry was cited as a method of improving intra-regional shipping specifically within Member States with the capacity to move goods. The management of routes also needed to be improved. Currently in the Caribbean, there were five (5) schooners competing on the same routes.

**Road and Riverain Transport**

- (i) Suriname, whose riverain transport in the interior is used by descendants of Maroons and Amerindians, was concerned with the extent of proposed road and riverain transport. It was agreed that the responsible parties should proceed carefully with development in those areas so as to be sensitive to the culture of the people and to preserve the unique qualities that attract locals and tourists to these areas. Developing an ecotourism model in conjunction with road/riverain transport would be a sustainable method of development. The speaker illustrated Barbados' unsustainable model of selling land to gain foreign exchange;
- (ii) It was considered necessary to design an urban development plan with a focus on an alternative transport system using less land in order to address the growing traffic problem caused by the influx of imported vehicles; and
- (iii) Singapore's and Bermuda's strict traffic policies were also cited as successful methods of reducing traffic congestion. For example, Singapore had instituted a permit system which would require that a driver incur a toll for utilising certain busy streets. Singapore had also enhanced its public transportation system to make it more desirable to use as opposed to driving a private vehicle. In Bermuda where it is densely populated, there were no rental cars, only rental mopeds. The Jamaica model of gaining revenue from vehicular import duties was not favoured by the Meeting which was of the view it exacerbated traffic congestion in the long run.

**Panel II**

**FINANCIAL SERVICES**

- (i) Banking Services;
- (ii) Insurance Services; and
- (iii) Securities services.

*Moderator: Mr. Edward Muller*

*General Manager*

*Development Finance Limited (South America)*

**(vi) Banking**

Topic – A Concept Paper on Banking Services in CARICOM

Author: Professor Roland Craigwell

**Professor Craigwell** posited that given the underdevelopment of the capital market banking services have been critical to the development of regional economies. He scanned the range of services provided by the banking sector, namely –

- (i) The acceptance of deposits;
- (ii) Contracting of loans;
- (iii) The financing of various transactions;
- (iv) Payment and money transfers;
- (v) Trading in money market instruments and foreign exchange;

- (vi) Provision of derivatives;
- (vii) Exchange rate and interest rate instruments;
- (viii) Money broking;
- (ix) Asset management;
- (x) Settlement and clearing services; and
- (xi) Providing financial information and advice.

He highlighted the following -

- (i) the banking sector does not face a human resource constraint as the supply of skilled persons appears adequate;
- (ii) the use of technology in the sector is primarily driven by facilities offered by the central banks and imposes externalities on the elderly;
- (iii) there is need for harmonisation of banking legislation and the acceptance of the CARICOM Financial Services Agreement (CFSA) would greatly speed up this process;
- (iv) tax incentives should be given in areas such as research and development, education and social development projects;
- (v) that the current scope of opportunities under trade agreements such as CARIBCAN and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is too narrow and banks should lobby for the expansion of coverage to boost investment opportunities;

- (vi) the institutional arrangements among the players in the sector need strengthening.

He also posited that banks confront both internal and external constraints, including –

- (i) the absence of an analytical culture;
- (ii) lack of uniformity in the application of technology;
- (iii) the small size of the regional market; and
- (iv) the existence of differing banking cultures.

Finally, he recommended policy actions to be taken by –

**(i) the private banking sector**

- (a) **establish** programmes and policies to fully utilise human resources;
- (b) **be proactive** in developments of the sector;
- (c) **produce** more financial information and analysis;
- (d) **familiarise** themselves with opportunities offered by trade agreements;  
and
- (e) **improve** public image.

**(ii) Governments**

- (a) **urgently sign** the CARICOM Financial Services Agreement (CFSA);
- (b) **harmonise** legislation to operationalise a single banking sector in the CSME;

- (c) **conduct** research on the relationship between taxation and banking profitability;
- (d) **establish** a watchdog agency to protect the interest of the consumer; and
- (e) **establish** a supra-national agency to facilitate the effective participation of banks in trade agreements.

**(iii) The Central Banks**

- (a) **encourage** banks to allocate more resources to foreign exchange-earning activities;
- (b) **create** the position of banking ombudsman; and
- (c) **engage** in more public education.

**(vii) Insurance**

*Topic-Strategic Plan for Insurance Services in the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).*

Author: Ms. Alma Gomez

**Ms. Gomez** scanned the historical development of the insurance sector and outlined the composition of its players; the range of services available, and its institutional and legislative architecture.

Her Paper set about to outline a five-year plan to develop and strengthen the sector in the CSME. Before doing so, she highlighted the CARICOM Member States' membership in international associations and focused some attention on the legislative framework for the sector within the CSME.

She contended that the best way to develop the sector was to strengthen the supervisory bodies of Member States based on the International Association of Insurance Supervisors' Insurance Core Principles.

She also contended that each Member State should have an Insurance Act which provided for an independent Supervisor of Insurance with powers to effectively supervise the industry. She noted that Suriname did not have an act and that St. Kitts and Nevis had separate legislation which allowed them to be treated as two (2) separate jurisdictions.

She highlighted the importance of implementing the CARICOM Financial Services Agreement (CFSA) and the need for a teamwork approach between the industry and the supervisors at the national level. She also made a call for the sharing of information among supervisors and that this should be provided for in national legislation.

Within the context of the CSME, **Ms. Gomez** argued that all insurers should have market access irrespective of their status in the jurisdiction.

She outlined nine (9) basic requirements for the seamless operation of insurers in the CSME including –

- (i) Compulsory licensing of all insurers;
- (ii) The uniform application of fees across the CSME;
- (iii) The levying of penalties on companies irrespective of status;
- (iv) The imposition of same deadlines for submissions for entire industry;
- (v) The need to pay careful attention to local asset ratio and collateral in cross-border markets; and

(vi) Determining and enforcing Statutory Fund requirements for entire industry.

She also highlighted the high taxation of the industry and made a strong argument for the non-taxation of statutory funds.

With respect to education she noted that not all jurisdictions have insurance institutes or colleges. She suggested that more training should be provided for managers and other insurance personnel.

Finally, she made seven (7) recommendations to develop the sector in the CSME, including -

- (i) Establishing the legal framework based on international standards;
- (ii) Adequately staffing, equipping and funding offices of Supervisors of Insurance;
- (iii) The non-taxation on investments income on funds held within the statutory fund.

She also provided a five-year Plan.

**(viii) Securities**

*Topic–Strategic Plan on Securities Services in the CARICOM Single market and Economy (CSME)*

Author: Mr. Kelvin Sergeant

**Mr. Sergeant** defined a securities market as one in which financial products are traded.

He pointed out that all economies needed an efficient and liquid securities sector which was supported by a secondary trading market as this, *inter alia*, allowed investors to

have alternative sources of investment as well as a wider range of investment opportunities.

He characterised the regional securities sector as low in liquidity and turnover, having made little changes in institutional investors and trading patterns over the period 1996-2006. Using the level of capitalisation and turnover of stock, he argued that the sector has contributed very little to the development of the regional economy in terms of creating new businesses, widening share-ownership and fostering a saving culture.

He highlighted the gains from an integrated securities market, including –

- (i) Increased Foreign Direct Investment;
- (ii) Harmonisation of legislation and interpretation of standards;
- (iii) Improved information sharing and cooperation between regional regulators;
- (iv) Widening and deepening of the market;
- (v) Increased access to international capital; and
- (vi) Diversification of country-specific risks;

He identified five (5) impediments to the growth and development of the sector –

- (i) The large number of small family-owned businesses;
- (ii) The high incidence of interlocking directorships among the boards of the listed companies;
- (iii) The inability of the institutional investors to develop and drive the market;

- (iv) Bottlenecks caused from operation of differing regulatory frameworks; and
- (v) The inability of regulators to manage the development of the sector especially in terms of pre-empting systemic risks.

He suggested the following strategies to further develop the sector –

- (i) Demand-side -
  - (a) Incentives to boost investors' use of a wider range of market instruments;
  - (b) Incentives to encourage family-owned firms to use a mix of debt and equity financing;
  - (c) Harmonisation of ten (10) core principles of the regulatory framework:
- (ii) Supply-side -
  - (a) Privatisation of State enterprises;
  - (b) Forging linkages with international markets;
  - (c) Strengthening the institutional infrastructure (legal, taxation, accounting);  
and
  - (d) Strengthening the Securities Commissions.

He also suggested that a regional policy framework which addressed the following issues would foster the operation of a single securities market –

- (i) Regulation of market participants;

- (ii) The raising of capital;
- (iii) Insider trading;
- (iv) The issue of new securities;
- (v) Take-over rules;
- (vi) Compliance audits and inspections;
- (vii) Securities registrations;
- (viii) Listing obligations;
- (ix) Reporting obligations;
- (x) Disclosure requirements;
- (xi) Corporate governance guidelines;
- (xii) Fee structure; and
- (xiii) The legal recognition of companies.

These should be buttressed by the following –

- (i) **encouragement** of firms to cross-list regionally;
- (ii) **facilitation** of cross border equity transactions and access to capital;
- (iii) **provision** of adequate intermediary support;

- (iv) **minimisation** of interlocking directorships;
- (v) **harmonisation** of laws;
- (vi) **harmonisation** of rules, procedures and instruments; and
- (vii) **coordination** and integration of technology.

He made ten (10) recommendations to develop the Securities Sector of the CSME –

- (i) **upgrade** the Securities Industry legislation;
- (ii) **modernise** and consolidate the regulatory framework based on international best practices;
- (iii) **improve** corporate governance based on international best practices;
- (iv) **introduce** principles-based accounting;
- (v) **amend** legislation to facilitate the sharing of information both regionally and internationally;
- (vi) **encourage** equity-based financing;
- (vii) **strengthen** the Securities Commissions so that they can effectively regulate the sector;
- (viii) **undertake** investor education programmes across the Region; and
- (ix) **encourage** and **strengthen** institutional relationships across the Region and internationally.

## **DISCUSSION**

The discussion focused on the need for greater monitoring of financial systems at both the national and regional levels particularly in the current environment where there had been a collapse of financial enterprises and institutions which had resulted in catastrophic consequences. In this regard the following proposals were made:

- (i) There be increased training of regulatory and supervisory staff in financial services in order to build the requisite capacity for adequate monitoring;
- (ii) The establishment of a sound legislative and regulatory framework for financial services;
- (iii) More appropriate technology should be used for monitoring and facilitating the development of financial services;
- (iv) There should be greater adherence to international standards which would serve not only to protect consumers but also to create convergence of systems among Member States;
- (v) There should be increased collaboration, communications and information sharing among financial regulatory institutions within the Region to facilitate improved monitoring of the sector;
- (vi) The supervision of banks, insurance companies and credit unions should be consolidated;
- (vii) The oversight of financial services institutions should be strengthened through greater scrutiny of financial statements, balance sheets and on-site visits;
- (viii) While all the elements of the Single Economy were not achievable in the short-term, CARICOM Member States should commit to the concept of convergence

and harmonisation of if they Region are to maximise the benefits of the Single Economy. Member States needed to first focus on convergence of financial systems and harmonisation while seeking to comply with international standards. In this regard, it was suggested that there be mutual recognition of financial services among Member States in seeking to create a regional financial market. This would require confidence by Member States in each others financial systems;

- (ix) Efforts could be made to buffer the countries of the Region which have vulnerable open economies from economic and financial cycles by negotiating special and differential treatment within international trade and economic agreements.

There was also discussion on whether or not a regional central bank could create more regulatory efficiency. Some supported the establishment of a regional central bank which would require Member States to relinquish some sovereignty and national control over their respective financial systems. Others were of the view that in order for Member States to have the option of competing in the global market, it was necessary maintain their own identity through national central banks.

### **Panel III**

- (i) Health and related Social Services -
  
- (ii) Education Services -
  - (a) Primary Education;
  - (b) Tertiary Education;
  - (c) Vocational Education;
  
- (iii) Environmental Services;

(iv) Cultural Services; and

(v) Sporting Services.

Moderator: Dr. Cornville Brown  
Director, Cardiology and International Associates  
The Bahamas Medical Centre

(i) **Health and related Social Services**

*Topic - Strategic Plan on Health and related Social Services in the CARICOM*

Author: Dr. Robert Brohim of Health Care Organisers and Advisers (HECORA).

**Dr. Brohim** provided some useful key data on the Members of the CSME, including health indicators such as infant mortality and life expectancy by gender.

He argued that due to government policies which emphasised water and sanitation, nutrition and the essentials of primary health care, the Region enjoyed a health care system which favourably compared with most countries of the world. He however cautioned that the challenge was to sustain the current health status and to continuously improve health in an environment of new threats, globalisation, increasing cost and increasing demand. He suggested that if the current trends were maintained the Region would realise its targets under the Millennium Development Goals.

He discussed the mortality trends highlighting that the main causes of mortality in the Region were Heart disease, cancers, cerebrovascular diseases and diabetes. He also showed that within recent years HIV/AIDS has moved from eighth to fifth position in terms of mortality. He pointed to the fact that the risk factors, especially overweight, were also on the rise in the Region.

He contended that universal accessibility to the healthcare infrastructure is a major determining factor in the provision of health in a country. This was challenging in countries with hinterlands and large rural areas.

He assessed the impact of the migration of health professionals. He pointed to shortages of nurses, epidemiologists and health statisticians.

He noted that there is a CARICOM Health Policy based on the Nassau Declaration of 2001. Regional priorities and planning are set out in the Caribbean Cooperation in Health Programme (CCH), which is now in its third phase. He suggested that during this phase emphasis should be placed on HRD, Health Information Systems and Health Promotion and Education.

He also noted that most of the Region's health programmes are donor funded and called for the development of a Regional Health Fund.

He addressed the areas of –

- (i) Human resource needs for the health sector where he proposed that governments approach destination countries to invest locally in the training of migrating health professionals;
- (ii) The legislative framework for the provision of health services, including the registration of pharmaceuticals and the protection of Intellectual Property Rights(IPR);
- (iii) Financing requirements for the sector, using the National Health Accounts approach. It was proposed that government spend at least 7% of GDP on health. It is also proposed that all CARICOM governments establish National Health Insurance Schemes;
- (iv) Incentives for the sector based on meeting targets;

- (v) Trade policy and health;
- (vi) Institutional requirements. Creating Medical Centers of Excellence; and
- (vii) Cross-sectoral linkages.

### **Recommendations**

- (i) Developing strategies to sustain the gains in health;
- (ii) Finalising the CCH III programme;
- (iii) Securing funding for the implementation of CCH III;
- (iv) Strengthening the CARICOM Health Desk;
- (v) Should Commitment to CARICOM Member States the principle of Essential Public Health Functions;
- (vi) Establishing the CARICOM Medical Centers of Excellence;
- (vii) Allocating at least 7 per cent of GDP to Health;
- (viii) Establishing National Health Insurance Schemes;
- (ix) Performing National Health Accounts;
- (x) Increasing the number of trained health professionals;
- (xi) Developing commercial approach to the migration of health sector professionals;
- (xii) Enacting the proposed Domestic Regulations for the Health Sector;
- (xiii) Intensifying the role of the Caribbean Accreditation bodies;
- (xiv) Establishing a CARICOM registration for pharmaceuticals;
- (xv) Establishing professional emergency response systems in CARICOM.
- (xvi) Implementing surveillance systems of chronic disease risk factors;
- (xvii) Developing a data base on health financing;
- (xviii) Developing a data base on health professionals and the training needs;
- (xix) Developing a data base on mental health, including its costs to the Region;
- (xx) Repealing the legislation on sodomy; and
- (xxi) Enacting legislation on food quality.

(ii) **Education Services**

(a) **Primary and Secondary Education**

Author: Dr. Didacus Jules

**Dr. Jules** cast a wide net for his analysis capturing Basic Education - Early Childhood Education, Primary Education, Secondary Education and Technical and Vocational Education. He argued that the guiding principles for the Regional strategy ought to be the UNESCO's four (4) imperatives ( **Learning to Learn; learning to do; Learning to Be, and Learning to Live Together**) the Declaration on the Ideal CARICOM Person as agreed by the Conference of Heads of Government, the UN's Millennium Goals, UNICEF's Convention on Rights of the Child, Global conventions on Rights of Teachers, and the Summit of the Americas Commitments and that these should be incorporated in a seamless manner in the National Education Sector Development Plans.

He provided statistics on student population within CARICOM and stressed that greater emphasis was needed at the Early Childhood and Primary levels.

He supported a Regional Strategy that is based on an essentialist framework which makes it easier for national authorities to subscribe to and which will incrementally build on early successes to progressively extend the agenda for collaboration and harmonisation.

Two (2) key principles of his strategy were the convergence of objectives, targets, and national and regional goals; and, the rationalisation of resources and efforts.

He posited that the regional strategy requires the following four (4) elements –

- (i) A Universal Human Resource Framework;

- (ii) A Common Infrastructure of Learning;
- (iii) A Harmonised Governance Framework; and
- (iv) A Creative and Shared Financing Mechanism (20 per cent of total public expenditure and 20 per cent of Official Development Assistance)

He made the following recommendations –

**(i) Policy**

There was a need for Coherent Education Reform Strategy, and it would be useful to learn from the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) experience in developing such a strategy.

**(ii) Early Childhood Education**

Regional partnerships should be encouraged among Governments, donors, private sector to make more opportunities available for ECE.

**(iii) Primary Education**

Renewed emphasis should be placed on learning basics and common remedial strategies to guarantee achievement.

**(iv) Secondary Education**

There was a need to improve performance at the secondary level. ICT should be incorporated in the planning, delivery and examination of the curricula. The Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence should be universally adopted.

**(v) Integrative Measures**

Schools should be used as a medium for delivering information on preventative health issues, skills enhancement, civic responsibilities, and entrepreneurship.

**(vi) Teachers**

Amalgamate teacher certification and professional initiatives; establish a regional professional standard for teachers under the Regional Accreditation mechanism. The minimum qualification should be a Bachelors of Education (with specialisation) plus professional licensing subject to renewal every five (5) years. Licensing should take the form of a mixed portfolio of professional development courses pursued in interregnum and record of performance (student passes, innovations in pedagogy, etc). Teacher mobility should also be addressed through a common framework for conditions of service, transferability of service record, terms of employment, protocols for free movement of teachers across the CSME.

**(vii) Educational Governance**

Establish the regulatory regime for private educational institutions; formally recognise Student Councils; adopt with modifications if necessary, the OECS Draft Education Act.

**(viii) Financing Education**

Adopt the 20/20 Principle; establish a regional Infrastructure fund for the renovation of education facilities.

**(b) Tertiary Education**

Author: Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie.

**Dr. Tewarie** drew upon the 1998 “World Declaration on Higher Education/The Twenty-First Century: Vision and Action” of UNESCO and the frameworks of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to define Tertiary Education –

*“The teaching and learning process that occurs following the completion of secondary education and provides academic credits and competencies that lead to certificates, diplomas and degrees from universities, university colleges, polytechnics, community colleges and similar institutions”.*

He posited that economic growth was a function of knowledge. He argued that tertiary education fosters a workforce that is skilled, productive and flexible. He highlighted the relationship between tertiary education and the development of knowledge-based economies, arguing that weak institutions coupled with weak knowledge managers gave rise to low development.

He stressed that regional governments should not cut back on the level of investment in tertiary education at this point in time. He opined that given the financial crisis and global economic recession, the SVEs of CARICOM needed (i) regional strategic thinking; (ii) regional strategic planning and regional collaboration as they move forward.

He highlighted the following statistics:-

1. There were 150 Tertiary Education Institutions in the region and that there was high level private sector participation in Jamaica and Saint Lucia;
2. There were 130,000 students writing the CXC each year;
3. There were 19,000 students sitting CAPE each year;

4. 100,000 persons were immediately ready for tertiary education each year

He argued that the region was moving too slow and that there was room for growth in investment in tertiary education. In this regard he also argued that the tertiary education sector should be treated as a sector for investment.

The strategic plan which he outlined for the sector was driven by three (3) key imperatives: (i) the need for reform of the sector; (ii) the need for rationalisation of its resource usage; and (iii) the need to rationalize the qualification requirement framework.

The reform entailed the following elements –

- (i) Legislation – bringing the legislation governing the tertiary sector in line with current technologies, governance practices, and the need to regulate the “for profit segment “ of the market;
- (ii) Teacher Education Strategies;
- (iii) A Regional Qualifications Framework;
- (iv) A Regional Accreditation Regime;
- (v) Sustainable financing strategy for the sector , its institutions and the students ( especially in terms of a loan financing system);
- (vi) Improving and sustaining the Participation Rate; and
- (vii) Strengthening the Administration, Management and Leadership of the Tertiary sector.

He contended that all CARICOM Member Governments should commit to improve the General Enrolment Rate in tertiary education of their nationals to 35 per cent by 2020 but this would only be sustainable if the quality of the throughput from the Primary and Secondary Education sectors improved.

He prescribed a dynamic for the Regional Strategy in which the Strategy was first defined and then the role of the Tertiary sector was mapped out, especially in terms of the development of the human resources, to ensure that the strategy was achieved.

**(c) Technical and Vocational Education**

Author: Mr. Navneet Boodhai

**Mr. Boodhai** flagged that Education makes one trainable and Training makes one employable. He highlighted the importance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training to the achievement of Millennium Development Goals by the Regions, the objectives of the Community and the Free Movement of Skilled Labour. He argued that a well structured Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system would increase productivity, enhance competitiveness and promote entrepreneurial activity.

While noting that there had been significant achievements since the Regional TVET Strategy was adopted in 1990, Mr. Boodhai stressed that both the administrators and the industry stakeholders were still grappling with many critical issues as follows –

- (i) At the wider CARICOM level within context of Free Movement of Skilled Labour the processes for assessing competencies of individuals; and the seamlessness of paths for learning within the education and training system;
- (ii) The fragmentation and, proliferation of training providers and the duplication of training programmes;

- (iii) The inadequacies of TVET curricula leading to mismatches between the supply and demand for skilled labour and high failure rates among trainees;
- (iv) The need for more emphasis on practical application in schools offering technology-based subjects;
- (v) The need for industry players to be engaged in setting occupational standards for the sector;
- (vi) The need for greater focus on Competency-based Education and Training; and
- (vii) The absence of “Centres of Excellence” that would promote the development of select activities critical to communities, Member States, and regions.

The rising importance of services in the regional economy was highlighted and Boodhai suggested that continued investment in education and training be channeled in the following services –

- (i) Tourism and related Services;
- (ii) Distribution;
- (iii) Construction;
- (iv) ICT; and
- (v) Education and Training Administration.

### **Proposed Regional TVET Strategy**

**Mr. Boodhai** argued that a competency-based TVET strategy, although it would have considerable resource implications for existing education institutions, was the way

forward for the Region. He was of the view that the Regional TVET Strategy of 1990 is still relevant and remained a strategic intervention for the advancement of human resource capability of the CARICOM Community Nationals and the challenges which the Region might face. He suggested that the success of a new approach will depend on –

- (i) The nature of the relationships between and among the education providers, the employers, and the social partners;
- (ii) The industry assuming ownership of this new approach;
- (iii) Rationalisation of qualifications offered by training institutions and alignment with the CARICOM Vocational Qualification (CVQ).

He identified nine (9) major actions of the 1990 strategy which were still to be completed, *viz* –

- (i) The establishment of National Training Agencies;
- (ii) The provision of resources which the Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies (CANTA) needs to effectively function, including launching of its secretariat; ensure the increased participation of countries at its meetings;
- (iii) The development of a Labour Market Information System—a Regional TVET Registry;
- (iv) The development of a Regional Communication and Marketing Plan;
- (v) The organisation of professional vocational and career guidance services;
- (vi) The award of CVQs within the post-secondary system and workplace in all Member States;

- (vii) The development of a Regional Qualifications Framework, which will assess all providers against stated criteria;
- (viii) The development and implementation of distance learning strategies especially in the smaller, less developed territories; and
- (ix) The implementation of Apprenticeship training Schemes, and Occupational Standards and Vocational Qualifications.

Four (4) broad elements of the Regional Strategy for Vocational Education were proposed -

- (i) **Administrative Framework** – strengthening of the CANTA Secretariat;
- (ii) **Human Resource Framework** – training of teachers/ administrators;
- (iii) **Legislative Framework** enactment of legislation to operationalise the regional initiatives and objectives; and
- (iv) **Financing Framework** the refinement of the financial framework to include mandatory training levies.

**(d) Environmental Services**

Author: Dr. Mark Griffith

**Dr. Griffith** argued the case for treating environmental services as an industry and that the CSME be recognised as an environmental zone. He highlighted the fact that matters relating to the environment had been relegated to the Common Support Measures under the Revised Treaty and posited that environmental services should be treated as the third pillar of the Community Sectoral Policy joining the Common Industrial Policy and the Common Agricultural Policy.

He acknowledged that currently there were deficiencies in the existing classification systems and suggested that the CSME classification be based on those services produced and consumed by SIDs, including –

- (i) Pollution management;
- (ii) information Knowledge/ Capacity Enhancing services;
- (iii) Cleaner technologies; and
- (iv) Production Groups.

**Mr. Griffith** further argued that the regional environmental policy should have at least four (4) broad elements:

- (i) Biodiversity and the aspects related to Intellectual Property Rights (IPR);
- (ii) Natural Resource Management (forestry and oceans);
- (iii) Sustainable Tourism; and

(iv) Standards and Technical Regulations.

In terms of financing and investment, **Dr. Griffith** argued that a Community-owned Resources be established to fund the implementation of the Community Environmental and Natural Resources Management Policy Framework. He suggested other financing instruments such as a Regional Sustainability Fund for Caribbean SIDs; and an Environment and Sustainable Development Investment Facility.

Finally, **Mr. Griffith** reminded the Meeting of the mandate given by the Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) that a Community Environment and Natural Resource Management Policy Framework (CENRMPF) be formulated and identified eight actions that would boost trade in environmental services, namely –

- (i) The establishment of a Regional and national institutional regulatory framework for environmental and natural resource management and the integration of environmental planning into the national economic and sector planning;
- (ii) Full application of the provisions of the Revised Treaty as they relate to the environment;
- (iii) The transformation of the CSME as a “Green Economy”;
- (iv) The pursuit a more environmentally sensitive approach to tourism development in the CSME;
- (v) The sustainable management and utilisation the resources within and under the Caribbean sea;
- (vi) Measuring and enhancing the Region’s biodiversity resources and traditional knowledge, especially that of the Region’s indigenous peoples;

- (vii) The strengthening and enhancement of the rules and disciplines related to trade in environmental services;
- (viii) The adherence to international environmental health and safety standards, including sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures.

**(e) Entertainment, Cultural and Sporting Services**

**(i) Entertainment Services**

Topic – The Creative Sector in CARICOM: The Economic and Trade Policy Dimensions

Author: Dr. Keith Nurse

**Dr. Nurse** tabled the following definition of the cultural or creative industries: “the economic activities of artists, arts enterprises, and cultural entrepreneurs, for profit as well as not-for-profit, in the production, distribution, and consumption of film, television, literature, music, theatre, dance, visual arts, masquerade, broadcasting, multimedia, animation, and fashion, to name but some activities.

He posited that the following features made the cultural/creative industries distinct –

- (i) It consists of several transactions networks and income streams;
- (ii) It creates circulars goods, services and intellectual property;
- (iii) It is a major growth pole in the knowledge economy.

He provided a scan of the economic significance of the global creative industry highlighting that in 2003 trade in creative products and services was valued at US\$1.2 trillion and that this was expected to rise to US\$2.2 trillion by 2012. He showed that Jamaica enjoyed a GDP and employment share of 5.1 per cent and 3 per cent

respectively in 2006. He cautioned that there were differences in methodologies and definitions in the calculations of these economic data.

He highlighted that while trade data on creative goods were relatively strong those for creative services were very weak or none existent especially in developing countries. He lamented that mode 2-type trade in creative services is the only area for which there are reliable data. He reported that trade in creative services enjoyed an annual growth rate of 11.2% between 2000 and 2005 rising from US\$52.2 billion to US\$89 billion. It was noted that trade in architectural services was included in the category of creative services.

He dealt with the issue of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and presented two case studies to emphasise the economic contribution of the creative sector in the Region –

- (a) The Bob Marley Museum; and
- (b) The Caribbean Copyright Link (CCL).

He cited an assessment done by CCL on the key issues which impacted on the copyright management system of the Region and listed eight (8) recommendations including -

- (i) The implementation of a CARICOM regional broadcast policy;
- (ii) Greater education and awareness programmes on piracy and other forms of intellectual property infringement; and
- (iii) Implementation of a 0 per cent on royalty earned within the Region.

With respect to trade policy, he argued that there are six (6) instruments which impacted on cultural and entertainment industries. These were identified as –

- (i) World Trade Organisation (WTO) – General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS);
- (ii) World Trade Organisation – General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT);
- (iii) World Trade Organisation – Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS);
- (iv) E-commerce;
- (v) The 2005 United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions; and
- (vi) Regional Trade Agreements such as the CARIFORUM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA).

He further argued that given the complexity and interconnectedness of the issues affecting cultural industries there was a need for close coordination of trade, industrial and intellectual property policies. In this regard, he highlighted some important areas of the EPA:

- (i) The Cultural Protocol which fosters cultural cooperation between CARIFORUM and the EU based on the spirit of the 2005 UNESCO Convention;
- (ii) The level of liberalisation in trade in cultural services, including audio-visual services;

- (iii) The low value-added between the EPA and the EU's commitments under the Doha Round, especially in **modes 1, 2 and 3**;
- (iv) The relatively high gains in **mode 4** trade; and
- (v) The quota-free market access of Contractual Service Suppliers who are artists, and other cultural professionals and practitioners to the EU market.

Finally he provided a situational analysis, including –

- (i) The economic value of the cultural industries sector is unmapped, unmonitored and undocumented;
- (ii) There is unmet demand for comprehensive policy initiatives addressing areas of need such as legislation, regulations, programme support, taxes, and incentives;
- (iii) Incentives to the industry are random and inaccessible;
- (iv) Intra-regional trade in cultural goods and services is impeded by cumbersome and restrictive border measures;
- (v) The institutional-capacity of cultural industries is weak;
- (vi) Establishing local presence in foreign markets is prohibitive;
- (vii) The infrastructure for the sector is underdeveloped across the Region;
- (viii) Policies affecting cultural industries are uncoordinated; and
- (ix) There are poor marketing and distribution networks.

As a result the following recommendations are made –

- (i) **Improvement** of government-industry relations through harmonisation of policies on trade, industrial and intellectual property, cultural diversity, and investment in the sector;
- (ii) **Documentation** of the economic impact, establish benchmarks, targets, employment generation, enterprise development, industrial upgrading and export expansion;
- (iii) **Increase** in the local and regional content on airwaves;
- (iv) **Development** of cultural industries associations to represent the interests of the sector;
- (v) **Improvement** of access to finance, credit and business support services for firms in the sector;
- (vi) **Establishment** of copyright protect and collection administration organisation;
- (vii) **Expansion** of linkages with tourism and other sectors;
- (viii) **Development** of internet-readiness for alternative broadcasting, marketing and distribution of cultural goods and services; and
- (ix) **Upgrading** of the human resource capabilities of the sector through training in the arts, arts administration, management and entrepreneurship.

**(f) Sporting Services**

Topic - Strategic Plan for Sporting Services

Author: Ms. Carole Beckford

**Ms. Beckford** formed a link between sports, physical education and Community development. She highlighted five (5) components of the sporting sector namely –

- (i) Education;
- (ii) Social development;
- (iii) Economic development;
- (iv) Civic responsibility and development; and
- (v) National development.

She also highlighted the role of and benefits to –

- (i) Member States;
- (ii) The CARICOM Secretariat;
- (iii) Sporting organisations;
- (iv) Educational institutions; and
- (v) Ministries of Sports.

In terms of the Regional Plan for Sport, **Ms. Beckford** cast a time horizon of 10-15 years and argued that the goal should be to achieve and sustain world class performances. This would be realised through making physical education available to all.

She suggested that the following policies would actualise this goal –

- (i) **Improving** the quality of life for every Community national;
- (ii) **Highlighting** the economic benefits of sport;
- (iii) **Promoting** voluntarism and participatory citizenship;
- (iv) **Building** and **maintaining** sport infrastructure; and
- (v) **Hosting** major sporting events.

She highlighted four (4) areas that could boost the human resources of the sector –

- (i) The training of and awarding of certificates to persons engaged in the technical functions such as teachers of physical education, sports media, sports journalism and sports marketing;
- (ii) The training and award of degrees to sports science personnel such as –
  - (a) Specialists;
  - (b) Physio-therapists;
  - (c) Kinesiologists;
  - (d) Chiropractors;
  - (e) Nutritionists;
  - (f) Mental health specialists;

- (g) Recreation;
- (h) Research;
- (i) Tourism and hospitality;
- (j) Construction of additional sporting facilities; and
- (k) Exchanges with institutions in developed countries.

She focused some attention on the matter of free movement within the context of the Revised Treaty and the operationalisation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). In this regard she created two (2) categories of sports personnel: persons with formal qualifications; and persons without and proposed that the former must possess the minimum qualifications (Certificates, Degrees) awarded by accredited training institutions or regional and international associations while the latter must possess a combination of qualifications and experience in order to be eligible for free movement.

With respect to non-qualified sport persons, she proposed a minimum of five (5) years experience with outstanding performances in the area of claimed expertise.

She further argued that both qualified and non-qualified sport persons should have a balance of high character and high competence.

She dealt with the issues of National and Most Favoured Nation Treatments cautioning against discrimination on the basis of not being affiliated to either a national, regional or international association.

She set some timelines for –

- (i) establishing common standards across the Region;

- (ii) immigration Departments requiring a Certificate of Recognition; and
- (iii) the institutional arrangements to be in place to facilitate the free movement of sport personnel.

She also identified eleven (11) elements of a national sports policy including health and safety, finance and budgeting and drugs. The difficulties encountered by sport personnel in getting financing were highlighted and five programmes were identified to address these difficulties. One such programme was that of incentives for land and equipment.

Natural linkages between sport and film as well as the benefits of trade in sporting services were also dealt with.

Finally, **Ms. Beckford** made a call for a regional Sporting Policy.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Educational Services**

- (i) It was proposed that any regional educational strategy should not just focus on University of the West Indies (UWI), but also be inclusive of all Caribbean universities including the Universities of Suriname and Guyana. It was noted that UWI already had collaborative relationships through the Organisation of American States (OAS) involving a number of institutions in Haiti and that UWI has direct relationships with the University of Guyana (UG) and the University of Suriname. It was further noted that through the European Development Fund (EDF), UG and UWI have a program dealing with forestry and sustainable development. The collaboration is ongoing but a greater reach is needed. UWI directly delivers to fifteen (15) countries whereas UG only delivers to Guyana;

- (ii) It was noted that developing the tertiary sector would call for the strengthening of national systems to build the regional system;
- (iii) It was suggested that Caribbean universities conduct exchange programs with each other to increase awareness and knowledge of individual cultures and to deliver qualified services;
- (iv) It was suggested that provision of services to Europe should include continental Europe. It was noted that Surinamese and Haitian laws are already based on those of continental Europe;
- (v) It was suggested that there be a mechanism for the regulation of offshore medical schools;
- (vi) Convergence of institutions was seen as a feasible method of sustainably broadening mandates in the Region.

### **Health and Related Services – Dr. Robert Mark Brohim**

In the discussion that followed -

- (i) There was a call for public-private partnerships where service providers could provide and shape Caribbean medical health. Under government contracts, special fees would be assessed based on socio-economic factors. Partnered care would potentially be at zero cost to governments/tax payers;
- (ii) It was suggested that Caribbean countries look into intra-regional medical tourism. Aruba and Suriname currently send patients to Colombia which has comparable to US standards but is closer and more financially feasible.

### **Entertainment and Culture Services – Ms. Joanne Tull**

In the discussion that followed -

- (i) It was proposed that the Caribbean define its people using a ten (10) word sentence that identify a true Caribbean individual;
- (ii) It was suggested that the Region project its cultural identity and infuse its culture back into the branding/marketing of traditional Caribbean events like cricket. The Trinidadian tag line “When you coming?” was used as an example to illustrate a successful marketing campaign in that regard;
- (iii) It was also proposed that meetings such as this Symposium place greater emphasis on exploiting the culture of the host island by bus tours, visits to schools and breakfast at the beach.

### **Sporting Services – Ms. Carole Beckford**

In the discussion that followed -

It was proposed that a strategic plan for physical education be aligned with the Olympics comparable to what was done with the CXC fashion and design syllabus and the fashion industry in Trinidad. Trinidadian designers agreed to revamp the syllabus and offer internships to fashion students. Cross-sectoral linkages could be developed as well with the development of the Caribbean fashion industry which in turn could revitalise the Caribbean cotton industry.

### **Panel IV**

- (i) Telecommunication Services;
- (ii) Computer and Related Services;

- (iii) Wholesale, Retail Trade and Commission Agents' services; and
- (iv) Franchising Services

Moderator: Mr. Alfred Hawley  
President  
St. Kitts and Nevis Coalition of Service Industries

### **Telecommunication Services**

Author: Dr. Hopeton Dunn

**Dr. Dunn** treated telecommunication services and Information, communication and technology (ICT) as an organic continuum of two (2) highly dependent yet operationally independent parts. He posited that given the varying levels of development of the CARICOM Member States and the fact that work is currently in progress to integrate the CARICOM Single Market and Economy into the global knowledge economy (CSME), the regional strategic plan should be based on harmonisation, cooperation and coordination.

He proposes a two-pronged strategic planning framework, *viz* –

- (i) **Creation** of an Enabling Environment including Human Resources Development/ Education and Training; Network Readiness, Infrastructure Development and Pricing; and Policy, Legal and Regulatory Framework; and
- (ii) **Promotion** Research and Development in order to facilitate the creation of a competitive environment including E-Business and Industry, E-Government.

## **Computer and Related Services**

Author: Dr. Camella Rhone

**Dr. Rhone** highlighted that access to information and knowledge depends on connectivity, capability and content. She posited that the Regional Strategy for Computer and Related Services should facilitate the creation of a robust global information infrastructure; support increased competition through open market and regulatory reform; protect intellectual property; encourage cross-industry linkages while enhancing information security; bridge the education and skills gap; reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers to Information Technology (IT) goods and services; and safeguard the viability and continued growth of the internet and e-commerce.

She set out an eight-point Policy Framework and Plan of Action for the sub-sector, *viz* -

- (i) **Enabling** e-learning and reducing the digital divide;
- (ii) **Expanding** e-government by putting more information and services online;
- (iii) **Removing** inhibitors to e-commerce readiness;
- (iv) **Introducing** trade policies to support e-commerce and the digital economy;
- (v) **Undertaking** e-commerce readiness assessment initiatives;
- (vi) **Developing** a science-based innovation approach to Information and Communication Technology (ICT);
- (vii) **Promoting** one-window access to SME programmes and services; and
- (viii) **Facilitating** access to technological innovations.

## **Postal and Courier Services**

Author: Ms. Dorcas Scantlebury

**Ms. Scantlebury** could not make this presentation due to the death of her father. As a result both the presentation and discussion were deferred. Ms. Scantlebury would however be able to make her presentation at a Workshop on Postal and Courier Services which was being convened on 8 September 2010.

## **Distribution Services**

### **(a) Wholesale, Retail trade and Commission Agents**

Author: Mr. Derrick M. Reckord.

**Mr. Reckord** stressed the strategic importance of wholesalers, retailers and commission agents in linking the consumers and producers, especially Brand-owners, manufacturers, and major wholesalers in North America. He argued that the distributive sector was the largest source of indigenous capital formation in the Region and required a sound financial system and responsive equity market. Looking into the future he highlighted the impact of advances in technology on the landscape of the distributive sector in CARICOM, arguing that though wholesalers, retailers and commission agents have resilient comparative advantages such as local knowledge, relationships and capital, commission agents they will fall casualty except in the area of government procurement.

In terms of a Regional Strategy for the sector, Reckord recommended three types, viz –

(i) Business Facilitation -

(a) **Revising** price control regimes;

- (b) **Creating** a regional stock market;
  - (c) **Implementing** policies which encourage venture capital funding;
  - (d) **Unleashing** the potential of the CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality;
  - (e) **Creating** a one-stop-agency for food safety, labeling, standards, etc.; and
  - (f) **Focusing** on policies which allow the free movement of mentors thus enhancing the quality of future business leaders in CARICOM.
- (ii) Trade Facilitation

Simplifying Customs Procedures and entry forms including –

- (i) The requirements and procedures for moving bonded products;
- (ii) Reducing the customs tariffs on goods such as alcohol and tobacco to minimise the incidence of smuggling;
- (iii) Reviewing the restrictions on sale of alcoholic beverages; and
- (iv) Other.

Developing and implementing policies which foster the vibrancy and growth of tourism, construction and distribution services.

He considered that it was implicit, that the distributive sector had an important role to play in creating regional brands, bolstering the penetration of regional manufactured products into the emerging markets as a result of trade negotiations, and developing a

cadre of regional wholesalers of regional goods in the major markets such as the USA, EU and Canada. However these present challenges which have to be addressed.

### **Franchising**

Author: Mr. G.L. Sydney Simmons

**Mr. Simmons** using the International Franchise Association's definition of a franchise argued that the Business Format Franchise is the more common of two types of franchises and better suited for the CARICOM Region. He lamented the absence of statistical data on franchising in the Region stressing that this lack exacerbated the challenge faced because of the lack of a franchising culture in CARICOM.

He highlighted that the regional legislative framework for franchising is weak, with only Barbados having specific franchise legislation and the other Member States regulating franchises using the provisions of other legislation such as the companies act. In his view the environment was ripe for harmonised legislation but he contended that the Barbados legislation should not be used as the basis for this harmonisation since, *inter alia*, it did not foster the development of an indigenous franchise sector with an export orientation.

It should be noted that **Mr. Simmons** did not hold much hope in the traditional franchise activities such as restaurants, catering services and quick service food outlets. Instead he supported policies aimed at developing the following –

- (i) Overweight Packaging and Postal Services at airports;
- (ii) Business Services Centres;
- (iii) Optometrists;
- (iv) Large-scale Pharmacies;

- (v) Professional Services;
- (vi) Car Maintenance;
- (vii) Convenience Stores; and
- (viii) Private Education.

For the Regional strategy on franchising, **Mr. Simmons** recommended that –

- (i) Either A Single CSME Franchising Registry or A Single Regional Registration Framework be developed to facilitate the registration of Franchises anywhere in CARICOM;
- (ii) CARICOM Member States enact a single harmonised law based on Model Franchise Disclosure Legislation;
- (iii) A Special Franchise Development and Enabling Strategy be developed;
- (iv) A Regional Franchise Body (Association) be established within an existing private sector organisation; and
- (v) The collection of data on franchising be regularised and standardised.

## **DISCUSSION**

Following the presentations by the panel the following issues were raised –

- (i) there should be an examination of initiatives by other developing countries particularly, small developing island states in the area of telecommunications and computer services in order to derive best practices which the Region could adopt or adapt;

- (ii) there should be optimal use of appropriate technology to facilitate the development in services within the Region which respect and promote Caribbean culture;
- (iii) there needed to be a central regulatory body for telecommunications;
- (iv) facilitation of telecommunication services needed to be put in place such as number portability, government reducing the costs of companies providing services to the consumer.

The need for regulatory legislation to facilitate cross-border online transactions.

### **GOAL**

Cross-cutting infrastructure for the basis of a Modern ICT Economy.

### **Definition**

In accordance with ISIC rev 4 Division 62 and 63 – computer and information services with sub sectors –

- (i) computer and information services; and
- (ii) in accordance with the definition as determined by the Regional Committee on Statistics and Indicators.

### **Policy**

Refer to Regional ICT Action Plan

Legislative

Refer to Regional ICT Action Plan

CARICOM Regional principles for international internet charges (e.g. support open standards)

Incentive

Refer to Regional Action Plan

Promote affordable access to technology by lowering tariffs on high-tech goods that are critical for building networks to deliver digital content.

**Panel V**

- (i) Professional Services;
- (ii) Consultancy Services;
- (iii) Construction Services; and
- (iv) Business Support Services.

Moderator: Mr. Dennis Strong  
President  
Caribbean Institute of Certified Management Consultants

## **Professional Services**

Author: Grenville Phillips II

**Mr. Phillips** defined a professional service as an activity where a person principally sells his or her time; the fees charged are based on an hourly rate times the number of billable hour spent performing the service.

He provided a brief situational analysis in which he traced the development of the sector from the early eighteenth century in which only health care and legal services were the predominant professional services offered in the Region. He established World War II (WWII) and the grant of independence to Member States as the historical turning points in the development of the sector. He posited since WWII the number of trained professionals has increased as developed countries, especially the UK, increased the intake of persons seeking training in professional areas. He posited that as a result of economic downturns and emigration the standard of service fell both in the public and private sectors with the former encountering a greater negative impact.

Based on a search of the yellow pages in Member States, **Mr. Phillips** provided some statistics on the number of companies offering professional services and the number of professional companies per 100,000 persons in each Member State, which *inter alia*, not only highlighted the vulnerability of the Member States but also the vulnerability of the professions.

**Mr. Phillips** then focused his attention on the supply of inputs into the profession. In this regards he argued that while the number of persons available seemed adequate to replenish the current stock of professionals most of these persons lacked the requisite mathematical skills. He posited that especially in the case of males, co-educational learning was having a significant negative effect at the secondary level due to the effect of puberty which lasts up to 15 years. He stressed that he was not against co-educational learning as this would not have an effect on males at the primary and tertiary levels.

He touched on the regulatory framework highlighting that while for the most part there was regulation for most professions with the principal aim of setting high standards and protecting consumers, the framework did not cater for assessing the standard of professional services performed. Regrettably, he lamented that the University of the West Indies (UWI) was no longer offering a fully accredited engineering programme while there were accreditation challenges with the engineering degree of the University of Guyana (UG). He provided a table to show the status of the regulatory framework in the CSME.

In terms of the financing needs of the sector, **Mr. Phillips** argued that this appeared adequate. He however highlighted that the requirement by lending institutions that professionals need to have a track record of deposits was a barrier to inexperienced persons practicing independently.

He also spoke on the issue of opportunities from Trade Agreements arguing that there were very few opportunities in absence of a regional branding framework.

In terms of Government procurement policies, **Mr. Phillips** argued that these in large measure excluded regional firms and, more importantly, this was the action of Member Governments, not the donors.

He identified four (4) constraints to the development of the sector -

- (i) Fear of being examined;
- (ii) Peer pressure;
- (iii) Persecution of individual service providers; and
- (iv) Unattractive salaries.

His recommendations included the following –

1. Policy Actions – Governments should –

- (a) Allow single-sex classrooms for the teaching of all science subjects, and for non-science subjects where 75 per cent of classroom students are under-performing;
- (b) Critically review the effectiveness of the teaching methods of the 60's and 70's;
- (c) Specify that any university in their country can only offer fully accredited degrees in professional disciplines;
- (d) Review their procurement rules; and
- (e) Allow fair competition in the procurement of Services.

National service coalitions should –

- (a) **Look** for and provide members with procurement opportunities;
- (b) **Facilitate** their members adopting high standards;
- (c) **Facilitate** national branding of professional services.

2. Data gaps –

- (a) Where missing provide information on the legislation regulating professional services;

- (b) Where missing provide information on the number of professionals practicing;
3. Legislative changes: Enact a single Professional Registration Act that -
- (a) covers all professionals;
  - (b) specifies adequate professional qualifications and an effective quality assurance mechanism to check the standard of services performed.

### **Consultancy Services**

Author: Dr. Lucretia Gabriel

**Dr. Gabriel** defined a consultant as one who possesses a Master's degree and has at least 10 years' experience. She argued that the existing framework is biased against regional consultants and recommended that Governments –

- (i) **Include** Consulting Services in the competitive base of contractors in the development projects;
- (ii) **Provide** fiscal support to the sector for example reducing/waiving withholding tax for regional consultants, granting 150 per cent tax allowance for training, making the payment of membership fees to professional associations eligible for tax credits, providing grants for marketing and developing innovative systems;
- (iii) **Allow** a preference margin for regional consultants;
- (iv) **Sensitise** Public Officers, mission representatives and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) to the economic significance of the consultancy sector;

- (v) **Provide** funding for the development of the Services coalitions in the Community;
- (vi) **Set** goals for the sector;
- (vii) **Establish** a monitoring committee which should have direct access to the Prime Ministers;
- (viii) **Hold** regional workshops for consultants;
- (ix) **Create** an interface between procurement personnel and regional consultants;
- (x) **Exclude** external consultants from participating in procurement contracts below US\$200,000 in value;
- (xi) **Initiate** annual regional awards and sponsor conferences for consultants;
- (xii) **Create** a regional database of consultants; and
- (xiii) **Increase** the value of procurement contracts awarded to regional consultants from the current 2 per cent to at least 25 per cent within the next five years.

### **Construction Services**

Authors: Prof C.A.C. Imbert and Prof T.M. Lewis

**Messer. Imbert and Lewis** stressed the economic significance of the construction sector highlighting that it contributes over US\$6 trillion per annum to the global economy. For the Caribbean, they argued that two (2) classes of firms could be identified based on turn over: firms with turnover below US\$500,000 and firms with a turn over- above US\$1.5 million. While accepting that projects over US\$20 million in

value would pose a serious challenge to most regional firms they recognised that this could be overcome by forming consortia or partnerships.

The issues and constraints highlighted for the development of the regional strategy for the construction sector were considered to be trade related namely -

- (i) The lack of a level playing field because of the use of pre-qualification criteria, the granting of waiver on import duties and other taxes which favoured foreign contractors and professionals;
- (ii) The provision of services such as designing and planning of works by foreign firms which by-passed the need to be knowledgeable of the Region, its culture, climate, geography and geology;
- (iii) The need for trade agreements to facilitate the increase participation of local firms.

Recommendations included –

- (i) **Minimising** combination/multi-stage contracts and where feasible disaggregating very large projects into multiple contracts;
- (ii) **Establishing** protocols for consortia, joint ventures, the transfer of technology, equitable sharing of risks, responsibility and profit;
- (iii) **Examining** the various concessions (support, subsidies and incentives) that are available to foreign firms both in the home country and locally, which may work against the competitiveness of the local firms;
- (iv) There should be reciprocity in treatment for foreign service providers in the local market *viz-a viz* locals in the foreign market.

## **Other services - Business Support Services**

Topic – Business Development Needs of Services Companies in the CSME

Author: Mr. Jerry Blenman

From the outset, **Mr. Blenman** immersed himself in the dynamism of the markets of the CSME and the wider global market and asked the question “Are the economies and the Services sector of the CSME financially, economically and technically capable of seizing a competitive edge over their global counterparts and thus gain more of the global market?”

He argued that there was an apparent disconnect between the ongoing policy initiatives and the realities facing the practitioners within the regional sector. This led him to further argue that the most pressing need facing the Region’s services sector was a supporting structure which practically fosters the development through capacity building, restructuring and retooling.

As a result he called for the broad-based reformation of how the Region’s services sector did its business. He also called for a redefining of the relationships within the regional and international economies to actualise best practices. These calls were buttressed by the following eight (8) enablers which were recommended to enable the Region to compete more effectively in international markets:

- (i) **The creation of Data and Business Intelligence Reservoirs.** The strengthening of Business Support Organisations, trade associations and Chambers of Commerce to collect data from members was stressed.
  
- (ii) **Improving the Structural Integrity of firms.** Here it was argued that structural quality rather than size of firm determined global competitiveness. Specific areas to be addressed included -

- (a) Strategy and Planning;
  - (b) Succession Planning;
  - (c) Implementing improved systems of internal governance; and
  - (d) Implementing control and monitoring systems.
- (iii) **Creating Operational Management Efficiency.** Specific emphasis was placed on well documented policies and procedures manuals; well documented procedures for the quality audit of internal systems; mechanisms for fostering transparency and disclosure; and the adoption of measures to minimise operational failures and risks.
- (iv) **Improving relevance, versatility and quality of Services.** It was here argued that emphasis had to be placed on continuous improvement through research, product design and development, market research, sales, revenue and profitability strategies.
- (v) **Improving quality management.** The importance of a Region-wide quality code for both sectoral and cross-sectoral services was here emphasised. Also the need for technical assistance in quality management systems and stronger interaction between The Caribbean Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ) were also emphasised.
- (vi) **Improving Technological Capacity.** The absence of an effective information and communication technology platform was identified as a major constraint of the competitive delivery of services to the consumers. The urgent need for a regional master plan to automate the key sectors of the regional economy, capture and restore data, and its phased implementation were highlighted. Emphasis on accessing real time data on financial and risk management reporting, and the administration of human resources were recommended.

- (vii) **Developing and optimising human capital.** It was argued that within recent times, the pace of change taking place in the Region's business sector had been faster than the build-up of relevant skills-sets. If left unchecked, this would render both the performance and productivity of the services sector sub-optimal. The call was therefore made for a comprehensive continuous human resource development programme starting with the key sectors.
  
- (viii) **Facilitating the creation of the "Commercial Credit Union of the Caribbean"**  
This entity would focus on the economic development of the Region by structuring and raising capital for development, and financing capacity-building.

Finally, **Mr. Blenman** addressed the issue of harmonisation, both legislative and infrastructural, to operationalise the business support measures for the services sector. He highlighted the apparent differences in effort to develop and implement the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) on one hand, and the liberalisation of the services market under the Revised Treaty, namely. The CARICOM Financial Services Agreement (CFSA) and the CARICOM Investment Code (CIC) and their implementation.

## **DISCUSSION**

In the discussion that followed -

- (i) It was clarified that in consultancy while research and communication skills are important, it is a common requirement for the consultant to also possess a master's degree and ten (10) years' experience;
  
- (ii) It was a matter of concern that politics involved in governments being allowed their choice of consultants, as this was often dictated to them by Europe. It was clarified that procurement rules of the International Financial Institution (IFI), International Development Bank (IDB) and European Development Fund (EDF)

is supposed to preclude such activity. However, these organisations may choose to demand certain consultants for quality purposes. Ultimately, these organisations have indicated that the choice of consultants is based on the terms negotiated by the individual countries;

- (iii) It was suggested that money be set aside to provide for implementation of proposals and suggestions from Meetings;
- (iv) It was noted that Caribbean Certification of management consultants would be responsible for providing training, assessment and follow up to ensure high standards for management consultants. The certification process is underway. There are members in ten (10) Caribbean countries and extended training is available;
- (v) It was proposed that the Caribbean countries utilise Caribbean consultants who would already have knowledge of the culture and Member States would be well represented in policy shaping;
- (vi) It was noted that the construction industry would continue to slow down based on the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

### **WORK GROUP SESSIONS**

The Meeting broke out into five (5) Work Group Sessions which mirrored the Panels. These Working Group sessions were led by the following moderators -

Panel I      Mr. George Goodwin;

Panel II     Mr. Edward Muller;

Panel II     Dr. Cornville Brown;

Panel IV Mr. Alfred Harley; and

Panel V Mr. Dennis Strong

Each Working Group was given a template containing nine (9) suggested elements for the Regional Strategic Plan. Using this template the Work Groups were asked to deliberate and make recommendations on each element of the Plan.

The resulting recommendations are found overleaf.

**SCHEMATIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE DRAFT REGIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SERVICES AS PROPOSED BY THE REGIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON SERVICES**

Sector/Activity	Goal	Policy Framework	Legislative Framework	Incentives	Human Resource Requirements	Financial Requirement	Technological Needs	Cross-Sectoral Linkages	Other
Tourism Services	Growth and sustainability of the tourism sector.	(i) Enhancement and diversification of product; (ii) Increase focus on Diaspora; (iii) Increase focus on intra-regional tourism; (iv) Increase focus on multi-destination travel; and (v) Common branding and marketing.	Harmonised environmental, food safety quality, visitor safety and security.	(i) Incentives for innovation of handicraft products; and (ii) Extension of incentives to entire tourism sector rather than hotel sector only.	(i) Harmonised workforce certification; (ii) Accelerated development of multi lingual skills; and (iii) Encouragement and facilitation of creativity and entrepreneurship in the supply of products and services to the tourism industry.	For marketing and other aspects of policy recommendations.	(i) Accelerated ICT uses; and (ii) Energy management.	Fostering of linkages between tourism and other economic sectors.	
Transportation Services	Safe and secure transport; Reliable, on time service; Good value; Productivity; Direct connectivity; Quality service; Sustainability (environmental, economic and social sustainability).	(I) Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas; (II) Liberal air service arrangements; and (III) Viable schedules.	(i) Air service agreements; and (ii) International Air Instruments: conventions, treaties.	Reduce ticket cost (up to 40 per cent of ticket cost includes taxes and other add-ons).	A stronger - Caribbean Aviation Safety and Security Oversight System (CASSOS) aviation inspectors, management.	Financing requirements to support CASSOS activities and supporting systems (to be determined).	(i) Fleet upgrade; and (ii) ICT to optimise airport operations.	Demand for air transport services is a derived demand from Tourism and Cargo	(i) Need for harmonisation of rules, regulations and legislation, e.g., aerodromes, pilot duty periods, training and certification; (ii) Maintenance of all systems to international standards; and (iii) Potential for Caribbean to expand its capacity for initial training for pilots and engineers.

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Sector/Activity	Goal	Policy Framework	Legislative Framework	Incentives	Human Resource Requirements	Financial Requirement	Technological Needs	Cross-Sectoral Linkages	Other
Maritime Transport	Safe and secure transport; Reliable service; Good value; Improved Labour and Cargo Handling Productivity; Direct connectivity; Sustainability (environmental, economic and social sustainability).	Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas.	(i) International Maritime Organisation (IMO), including international maritime instruments; and (ii) Harmonisation legislation and ratification and ascension to all major international treaties governing safety and security and pollution prevention by all States.	(i) Provision of incentives to facilitate the upgrading of schooners and smaller vessels; and (ii) Provision of incentives to encourage ferry services to support connectivity.	Regional integration of Training and certification of HR to IMO standards.	(i) To support HR training and institutional upgrading (to be determined); and (ii) Cost of incentives and technical support for the development of schooner and small vessel operators.	Implementation of a regional integrated trade community system (ICT)	(i) Tourism; and (ii) Agriculture, Manufacturing and other services.	
Road and Riverain Transport	Seamless and cost efficient intermodal transport services (maritime, riverain and road)	To be based on best practices within the Region subject to national conservation policies.	To be based on best practices within the Region subject to national conservation policies.	Reduced traffic congestion, increase energy savings, labour productivity and reduce production costs.	A cadre of trained road and riverain transport managers and planners.	Financing for specific intermodal network feasibility studies.	Damage, repair and ware planners' technology.	All sectors of the economy.	
Banking Sector	(i) To create an effective, efficient, stable and efficient regulated systems in accordance with international practice by way of mergers and acquisitions; (ii) To foster optimum allocation of financial resources;	(i) To institutionalise regional information sharing; (ii) To ensure the financial sector assists in the Region's financing needs, e.g., venture capital financing for SME;	(i) Need to look more closely at the implementation of Basel II; and (ii) Need to undertake more sophisticated due diligence programmes.	Tax exemption for furthering education of professionals in general and banking professional in particular.	(i) Nurture experienced middle tier managers for industry; (ii) Undertake manpower skill survey and skills audit; (iii) Ensure human resource requirements needs for the sector are adequately met	Public/Private partnerships. (N.B.: The financial sector will need a strategic plan in order to determine its financial requirements).	(i) Adopt policies aimed at promoting appropriate technology use; and (ii) Coordinate and integrate technological needs at the regional level.	All sectors of the economy.	

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Sector/Activity	Goal	Policy Framework	Legislative Framework	Incentives	Human Resource Requirements	Financial Requirement	Technological Needs	Cross-Sectoral Linkages	Other
	<p>(iii) To attract investment into the Region;</p> <p>(iv) To encourage the internationalisation of capital flows in the Region's financial sector;</p> <p>(v) To encourage share of information regionally and locally;</p> <p>(vi) To support the development of the Region efforts to mobilise savings for investment purposes; and</p> <p>(vii) To engage in education and sensitisation of the operations and contributions of the regional financial sector.</p>	<p>(iii) To support the development of appropriate mechanisms and avenues for raising capital across the Region at the level of Head of State;</p> <p>(iv) To identify a champion to address the international image of the Region's financial sector;</p> <p>(v) To promote a wider menu of investment instruments;</p> <p>(vi) To promote wider shareholding participation by the Region's citizens;</p> <p>(vii) To promote greater use of employer scheme ownership policies;</p> <p>(viii) To strengthen regional collaboration; and</p> <p>(ix) To ensure educational policies to support the Region's financial services.</p>			<p>through training, internships and attachments; and</p> <p>(iv) Establish regional professional financial institution for training.</p>				

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Sector/Activity	Goal	Policy Framework	Legislative Framework	Incentives	Human Resource Requirements	Financial Requirement	Technological Needs	Cross-Sectoral Linkages	Other
Insurance Services	<p>(i) To create an effective, efficient, stable and efficient regulated systems in accordance with international practice by way of mergers and acquisitions;</p> <p>(ii) To foster optimum allocation of financial resources;</p> <p>(iii) To attract investment into the Region;</p> <p>(iv) To encourage the internationalisation of capital flows in the Region's financial sector;</p> <p>(v) To encourage share of information internationally, regionally and locally;</p> <p>(vi) To support the development of the Region efforts to mobilise savings for investment purposes; and</p>		<p>(i) Region must adopt the IAIS core principles for insurance; and</p> <p>(ii) Establish insurance ombudsman.</p>	<p>Tax on investment income on funds held within the statutory fund/technical reserve should be removed to allow the build-up of reserves to reduce reliance on reinsurance and to lower the amount of foreign exchange leaving the Region.</p>	<p>Need for insurance accountants, actuaries, and loss adjusters, insurance lawyers and supervisors.</p>	<p>Public/Private partnerships.</p>		<p>There can be a concerted effort between the banking and securities and other financial institutions to maintain stability within the financial sector.</p>	

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Sector/Activity	Goal	Policy Framework	Legislative Framework	Incentives	Human Resource Requirements	Financial Requirement	Technological Needs	Cross-Sectoral Linkages	Other
	(vii) To engage in education and sensitisation of the operations and contributions of the regional financial sector.								
Security Services	<p>(i) To create an effective, efficient, stable and efficient regulated systems in accordance with international practice by way of mergers and acquisitions;</p> <p>(ii) To foster optimum allocation of financial resources;</p> <p>(iii) To attract investment into the Region;</p> <p>(iv) To encourage the internationalisation of capital flows in the Region's financial sector;</p> <p>(v) To encourage share of information internationally, regionally and locally;</p>		<p>(i) Establishment of adequate intermediary support across the Region;</p> <p>(ii) Minimisation of interlocking directors on Boards or ensuring strict observation of disclosure requirements;</p> <p>(iii) Emphasis on investor education in the Region;</p> <p>(iv) Harmonisation of financial laws, company laws, trust laws, bankruptcy legislation, disclosure requirements and taxation policies;</p> <p>(v) Harmonisation of listing rules and procedures and establishment of a Memorandum of</p>	<p>Governments should -</p> <p>(i) Provide investment incentives and strengthen prudential standards guiding the operation of securities issuers;</p> <p>(ii) Seek to expand the range of financial products offered to the investing public and give consideration to the privatisation of state enterprises;</p> <p>(iii) Actively encourage firms to crosslist regionally and facilitate cross-border equity relationships and ease of access to capital markets; and</p> <p>(iv) Provide tax incentives for</p>	<p>(i) Need for forensic accountants, financial specialists, financial economists, securities lawyers; and</p> <p>(ii) Need for experienced mid-level managers.</p>			<p>(i) Investment Banking;</p> <p>(ii) Regulation; and</p> <p>(iii) Education.</p>	

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Sector/Activity	Goal	Policy Framework	Legislative Framework	Incentives	Human Resource Requirements	Financial Requirement	Technological Needs	Cross-Sectoral Linkages	Other
	<p>(vi) To support the development of the Region efforts to mobilise savings for investment purposes; and</p> <p>(vii) To engage in education and sensitisation of the operations and contributions of the regional financial sector.</p>		<p>Understanding (MOU) to treat with a number of common issues, including listing fees;</p> <p>(vi) Strengthening the legal framework by upgrading the securities industry laws across the Region;</p> <p>(vii) Modernisation and consolidation of the regulatory framework in accordance with international best practice;</p> <p>(viii) Improvement of corporate governance in accordance with international best practice;</p> <p>(ix) Ensuring that principle-based accounting is introduced as opposed to rules-based accounting and</p> <p>(x) Ensuring international standards are</p>	<p>continuing education in finance and banking.</p>					

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Sector/Activity	Goal	Policy Framework	Legislative Framework	Incentives	Human Resource Requirements	Financial Requirement	Technological Needs	Cross-Sectoral Linkages	Other
			maintained for information disclosure and reporting.						
Health and Human Services	To continuously improve the health status of Caribbean nationals.	<p>(i) Caribbean Cooperation in Health (CCH III);</p> <p>(ii) Nassau Declaration 2001-</p> <p>(a) Super priorities - HIV and AIDS; Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases (CNCDs); and Mental Health;</p> <p>(b) Cross-Cutting Priorities - Health Information Systems; and Human Resources Development;</p> <p>(iii) Recommendations adopted by Heads of Government in 2005 from Report of the Caribbean Commission on</p>	<p>(i) Professional Standards (Registration);</p> <p>(ii) Institutional Standards (Licensing and accreditation);</p> <p>(iii) Procurement Standards;</p> <p>(iv) Health Promotion Standards (tobacco control, food labeling, seat-belts etc.);</p> <p>(v) Harmonized legislation for the free movement of health professionals; and</p> <p>(vi) Intellectual Property (pharmaceuticals etc.).</p>	<p>(i) Reducing or eliminating taxes on medical and health commodities;</p> <p>(ii) Creating the environment for private capital investment;</p> <p>(iii) Incentivise remuneration packages for health workers under special circumstances (services in remote areas, high risk professional areas, specially skilled areas); and</p> <p>(iv) Target driven remuneration.</p>	<p>(i) Region wide Human Resource Master Plan;</p> <p>(ii) Implement accepted approaches to manage migration; and</p> <p>(iii) Create scholarships and loans for the education of health professionals.</p>	<p>(i) Raise the level of spending in health to at least 7% of GDP;</p> <p>(ii) Prioritize funding for care of vulnerable;</p> <p>(iii) Institution of health taxes;</p> <p>(iv) Support the development of health financing schemes; and</p> <p>(v) Explore regional health insurance mechanism to support shared services.</p>	<p>(i) Integrated health information systems;</p> <p>(ii) Establishment of Standards and Quality Networks;</p> <p>(iii) Establishment of Centres of Excellence for Advanced Tertiary Care (kidney, heart, cancer); and</p> <p>(iv) Development of a regional center for Emergency Preparedness.</p>	<p>(i) Development of health promoting schools (physical education, nutrition);</p> <p>(ii) Cooperation in nutrition and agriculture;</p> <p>(iii) Trade Policy support for Health Sector; and</p> <p>(iv) Contingent Rights for Migrants.</p>	

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Sector/Activity	Goal	Policy Framework	Legislative Framework	Incentives	Human Resource Requirements	Financial Requirement	Technological Needs	Cross-Sectoral Linkages	Other
		<p>Health and Development 2005;</p> <p>(iv) Port-of-Spain Declaration on CNCDS 2007;</p> <p>(v) Development of unified Resource Mobilisation Framework;</p> <p>(vi) Development of Strategy for Public/Private Partnerships in Health; and</p> <p>(vii) Develop Managed Migration Policy.</p>							
Education - Primary and Secondary Levels	Establish a viable and harmonised framework for basic education - ECE, Primary, Secondary. This is to provide the foundation - it is an essential component - for Caribbean Competitiveness and the development of the "Caribbean Person."	<p>Coherent education reform strategy - use OECS model as base;</p> <p>(ii) Sequential implementation which builds on functional accomplishments;</p> <p>(iii) Respect national sovereignty but create a regional architecture that avoids duplication of national bodies/structures;</p> <p>(iv) Alignment with international</p>	<p>(i) Harmonise education acts;</p> <p>(ii) Consolidate and strengthen certification mechanism (CXC at all levels);</p> <p>(iii) Regulation of "International schools" to incorporate elements of Caribbean Society; and</p> <p>(iv) Regional teacher mobility and transferability (service, conditions, records, employment).</p>		<p>(i) Amalgamation of Teacher certification and professionalisation initiatives;</p> <p>(ii) Establishment of a regional professional standard for teachers under the regional accreditation mechanism; and</p> <p>(iii) Effective human resource planning, including selection, succession and replacement.</p>	<p>(i) 2020 United Nations principle on social spending; and</p> <p>(ii) Regional infrastructure fund for renovation and upgrade of educational facilities.</p>	Integration of ICT in education (hardware - including computers and cell phones - and software).	<p>Establish the Regional Accreditation Agency - the three principal aims of which are -</p> <p>(i) a seamless system;</p> <p>(ii) free movement of skills; and</p> <p>(iii) International recognition as a matter of urgency;</p> <p>(iv) Establish a regional qualification framework from pre-primary to tertiary.</p>	

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Sector/Activity	Goal	Policy Framework	Legislative Framework	Incentives	Human Resource Requirements	Financial Requirement	Technological Needs	Cross-Sectoral Linkages	Other
		protocols in education; and (v) Integrate with non-English speaking CARICOM members.							
Education - Tertiary Level	To foster the educational, social and cultural advancement of our people	(i) Research linked on the one hand to the solution of social, economic and political challenges and on the other to create and innovate; (ii) Develop the capacity for critical and ethical thought and action; and (iii) Increase enrollment in tertiary institutions to 35 per cent by 2020.	(i) Harmonise tertiary education acts; (ii) Consolidate and strengthen certification mechanism; (iii) Regulation of "International schools" to incorporate elements of Caribbean Society; and (iv) Regional teacher mobility and transferability (service, conditions, records, employment).		(i) Strengthening of national capacity and the improvement of local standards to meet national and regional aspirations and international norms; and (ii) Building research capacity across the sector linked to regional needs and solutions and global trends.	Work through issues of financing of plant, infrastructure and equipment, as well as issues of student financing and ensuring sustainable access.	(i) Integration of ICT in education (hardware - including computers and cell phones - and software; and (ii) Strengthen ICT systems and the reach, scope and user-friendliness of distance education.	(i) Establish the Regional Accreditation Agency - the three principal aims of which are (a) a seamless system; (b) free movement of skills; and (c) International recognition as a matter of urgency; and (ii) Establish a regional qualifications framework from pre-primary to tertiary levels.	

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Sector/Activity	Goal	Policy Framework	Legislative Framework	Incentives	Human Resource Requirements	Financial Requirement	Technological Needs	Cross-Sectoral Linkages	Other
Education – Technical and Vocational Levels	Developing a competent, certified (regional), innovative, entrepreneurial and adaptable workforce linked to existing and emerging industry demands.	(i) Update and implement CARICOM 1990 TVET strategy; and (ii) Continual engagement of private sector and other stakeholders.	(i) Harmonisation of qualifications and certification; and (ii) Harmonisation of existing TVET legislation.		(i) Conduct skills foresights studies; (ii) Upgrade and update labour market information systems to provide accurate and timely data; (iii) Skills (hard and soft) training for instructors, assessors and verifiers; and (iv) Assessment of TVET candidates (in and out of school learners) to ascertain competencies.	(i) 2020 United Nations principle on social spending; (ii) Mechanisms for public and private sector cost sharing (levies, funds, industry led/demanded programmes, etc.); and (iii) Funding of regional body secretariat (CANTA).	(i) Regional one-stop e-platform. Data, statistics, list of accredited institutions, programmes, assessors and verifiers; and (ii) Integration of ICT in education (hardware – including computers and cell phones – and software).	(i) Establish the Regional Accreditation Agency – the three principal aims of which are (a) a seamless system; (b) free movement of skills, and (c) International recognition as a matter of urgency; and (ii) Establish a regional qualifications framework from pre-primary to tertiary.	(i) Regional dictionary of occupations; and (ii) Re-branding of TVET.
Entertainment and Cultural Services	Enhance the competitiveness of the Region's Cultural Industries.	(i) Effective implementation of freedom of movement of creators and cultural entrepreneurs (CSME, Cultural Visa); (ii) Legislation; (iii) Incentives framework for businesses investing in sector; (iv) Financing; (v) Statistics and Data Collection; (vi) Harmonisation of policies in trade,	(i) Harmonisation and simplification of intra-regional trade measures; (ii) Common Customs regimes, skills certification, carnet system; (iii) Content quotas: minimum levels of local/regional content; (iv) Intellectual Property – value legislation,	(i) Tax credits and tax holidays for industry; (ii) Reduction of import duties and ODCs; (iii) Tax incentives for purchasers of Caribbean products; (iv) Tax exemptions for importation of specialised equipment and materials; and (v) Double taxation treaties with	(i) Technical training in arts (secondary and tertiary); (ii) Provide specialised training opportunities – (a) technical, legal, entrepreneurial and business support fields (publishing, entertainment contracts, artist management, copyright administration, arts	Improved access to credit and finance for the cultural sector, to include – (i) Venture capital funds; (ii) Security-based lending schemes (based on valuation of intellectual property assets); and (iii) Grant and	(i) Systems to facilitate better online marketing and distribution; (ii) Expand eCommerce platforms; (iii) Improve technology of existing operations; and (iv) Better intra-regional networking in communications systems (video-con, VOIP...).	Strategies for increased linkages between cultural industries and wider economy, e.g., (i) Distribution; (ii) Education; (iii) Financial Services; (iv) Tourism; (v) ICTs; and (vi) Sports.	Trade and export facilitation (i) Trade policy development and harmonisation; (ii) Market intelligence gathering; (iii) Marketing support and attendance at trade fairs; (iv) Establishment and support for trade shows in the Region (International book

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		education, ICT, tourism, finance and culture; (vii) Enshrine in national policy, support for institutional strengthening of industry organisations; and (viii) At regional policy level, support the establishment of a regional council of industry associations.	enforcement; (v) eCommerce; (vi) Double taxation agreements; (vii) Co-production agreements; and (viii) Cultural Industry Encouragement Act.	trading partners (withholding taxes).	administration); (iii) Provide short term industry training (internships, attachments, exchanges); and (iv) Partner with accredited organisations such as CXC, and international cultural counterpart organisations.	development funding.			fair; film festival, fashion, etc.); and (v) Introduce carnet system for temporary movement of goods/equipment, etc.
Sporting Services	(i) A level playing field created by mandating national policies to feed into a regional policy; and (ii) Sports recognised as a profession and as a business.	(i) Set targets for specific age groups: How many sessions per week should PE be taught and up to what age group; (ii) Major Events Attraction Programme; (iii) Building and Maintaining infrastructure; and (iv) Policy should reflect Social Inclusion -	(i) Restructure Education Act to include Physical Education; (ii) Regulate how major events are hosted; (iii) [Follow rules of the environment.]; (iv) Develop guidelines for intellectual property; and (v) Enforce registration, certification and accreditation of professional bodies.	(i) Waivers on tools and equipment; (ii) Training; (iii) Provide health tourism facilities, sport tourism facilities, other venues; and (iv) Research and Development - Trends in sport consumption.	(i) Focus on teacher training: Linkages with Cuba, Jamaica, and Barbados. These have institutions which already train in PE and Sport - (a) Focus on the value added professions: (i) Sport Management; and (ii) Event Management and Promotion.	Budget (to be approved) - (i) Implementation (ii) Monitoring; and (iii) Certification; and (iv) Facility Development and Maintenance.	Use of technology to facilitate - (i) Better communication for teaching; (ii) Better communication for training; (iii) Branding and Marketing; (iv) Franchising and Merchandising; and (v) Technical preparation -	(i) Film; (ii) Education; (iii) Health and Wellness; (iv) Tourism; and (v) Culture and Entertainment; (vi) Fashion; and (vii) Media.	<i>Recommendations for the Way Forward -</i> (i) Regional policy on Physical Education and Sport (Due by October 2010) - (a) Outline to be determined; and (b) Budget to be approved (ii) Mandate each Member State to create or rejuvenate

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		Voluntarism, active citizenship.			(iii) Standards and Monitoring (use of best practices). (iv) Venue Management.		(a) Drug testing; (b) Sport Science.		(iii) Physical Education associations; CARICOM Secretariat to meet with Ministries of Education in April 2010 to present draft policies (six months before the final copy is due; and (iv) Appoint a CARICOM champion to assist in monitoring developments in Sporting Services.
Telecommunication Services	Development of additional value added	(i) Improved regulatory environment (Measures that ensure effective competition - Competitive bandwidth pricing in the reseller market; (ii) Extend the broadband network; (iii) Training; (iv) Implement effective network marketing protocols; and (v) Liberalise customer premises rules.	(i) Related to SMS spamming; (ii) Draft Model Modern Telecommunications legislation/laws; (iii) Review Spectrum Management framework document; and (iv) Rationalise regulatory institutions.		Train/re-train and certify at all levels	(i) Establish Universal Access Fund; and (ii) SME development	(i) Ongoing Extension of the network to NGTs; and (ii) Service level of agreements (e.g. Quality of Service).	Encourage across all industries	

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Sector/Activity	Goal	Policy Framework	Legislative Framework	Incentives	Human Resource Requirements	Financial Requirement	Technological Needs	Cross-Sectoral Linkages	Other
Computer and Related Services	Cross-cutting infrastructure for the basis of a Modern ICT Economy.	Refer to Regional ICT Action Plan.	(i) Refer to Regional ICT Action Plan; and (ii) CARICOM Regional principles for international internet charges (e.g., support open standards).	(i) Refer to Regional Action Plan; and (ii) Promote affordable access to technology by lowering tariffs on high-tech goods that are critical for building networks to deliver digital content.				Establish a Chair at an appropriate institute to provide continuing guidance on training based on new technology directions. (Ongoing approved list of skills)	
Distribution Services Wholesale, Retail and Commission Agents Services	(i) Provision of vital linkages for goods and services; and (ii) Formation of Indigenous capital.	(i) Competition Policy; (ii) Strengthen consumer laws (incl. anti-dumping); (iii) Rationalise agencies which regulate the sector to clearly identify the Standards authority (e.g., quality, food safety); and (iv) Standardise classifications.	(i) Review Customs duty regimes and special charges and taxes; (ii) Port Facilitation; and (iii) Harmonisation/Rationalisation of relevant Laws.		(i) Training for all related personnel (e.g. customs officers)/ Certify/accredit; and (ii) Enforcement of Free Movement of persons laws (skilled workers).		(i) eCommerce; and (ii) Electronic Data Interchange (EDI).		
Franchising Sector	Boost exports through Franchising Model.	(i) Enabling legislation; and (ii) Regional franchise registry.	See copy of Model law in paper.		(i) Business format training; and (ii) Transfer of knowledge/ skills.	(i) Financing; (ii) Venture capital; and (iii) Relevant SME Financing Mechanisms.	e-Commerce.	All sectors.	
Business Support Services	(i) Strengthened, recognised and respected support for Businesses; and	(i) Policy at the regional and international levels to ensure access to inter-	(i) Quality Code which addresses sectoral and cross-sectoral needs; and	(i) Implementation of Operational Management Guidelines;	(i) Technical Assistance for HR development in various sectors; (ii) Inventory of Skills and	Establishment of Commercial Credit Unions for funding Businesses.	(i) Master plan for automation of all key industries; and (ii) Development and		

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	(ii) Strengthened sectoral integrated and operational framework for Business Support.	regional and global markets; and (ii) Risk Management Policies.	(ii) Code of Practice and Service Delivery.	(ii) Quick and Effective Justice System; and (iii) Adherence to Audit and Reporting and other statutory requirements.	(iii) Skills Gaps; Qualitative information on level of competences required under various categories; (iv) Harmonisation of HR policies to promote culture and excellence; and (v) HR Database.		implementation of technology maintenance, storage and restoration policies.		
Other Business Services	Regionally and Internationally competitive consulting firms earning at least US \$ 45m between 2010-2013.	Support from Government through policies that aim at promoting Businesses.	Procurement procedures which allow Caribbean firms to be competitive.	Tax Relief for training, membership fees for associations, building innovation systems.	(i) Mentor-Protégé Programmes; (ii) Prime Contractors Round Table; and (iii) Registration and Certification of firms and professionals in the business.	(i) Financing Specific to consulting firms, e.g. intellectual Property as a basis for loans; (ii) Bonds; and (iii) Accessible Insurance.	(i) Internet and VOIP; and (ii) ePlatform of requests and Proposals.	(i) Standards, Certification and Registration; and (ii) Support for regional organisation.	
Professional Services	(i) Professionals with Best Practice Standards; (ii) Harmonisation of regional qualifications and standards completed; and (iii) Fully functional Accreditation Bureau.	(i) Abide by Broad International Standards of Various Professions; and (ii) Policies in place to increase the number of professionals in some professions.	(i) Effective mechanisms for the enforcement of Quality standards; and (ii) Legislation for continuous professional development.	(i) Reduced taxes for companies with mentorship programmes; (ii) Incentives for research; (iii) Incentives to set up Professional Associations; (iv) Revision of the tax structure of professional service providers; and	(i) Restructure the curriculum in order to favourably compete regionally and globally; and (ii) Put mechanisms in place to tackle barriers that hinder students from becoming professionals.	Grant scholarships for students to pursue professional courses.	Various Professional Bodies to ensure the use of up-to-date technology.		

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				(v) Establishment of National Accreditation Bureaux.					
Environmental Services	A consolidated competitive environmental sector.	(i) Policy framework in line within Caribbean Community environmental protection and natural resources framework; and (ii) Climate Change framework.	Mechanisms for Transforming Community Decisions into law.	(i) Fiscal Incentives; (ii) Grant duty-free access to environmental goods; and (iii) Formulate contracts into smaller discrete economic packages.	(i) Earlier Introduction and mandatory implementation of Environmental Curriculum in schools; and (ii) Utilise fully SIDSTA.	Regional Sustainability Fund for environmental services firms.	Access to environmentally sound technologies.	Across all sectors.	
Construction Services	A construction Industry which satisfies the needs of the communities of the Caribbean at international standards and is internationally competitive.	(i) National and Regional Policy that contains: Equity of treatment, transparency, redress; and (ii) Clearly defined Procurement Processes.	(i) Codes of Practice; (ii) Standards; (iii) Effective Enforcement; (iv) Harmonisation of regional registration Procedures; (v) Mandatory Registration of professionals; and (vi) Proper Domestic Regulations.	(i) Facilitation of local/regional consortia and joint ventures with foreign firms; (ii) Restrict right of commercial presence of foreign firms which are detrimental to local firms; and (iii) Pre-qualification: High priority for inclusion of local (regional) expertise.	(i) Accreditation and qualifications; (ii) Standardisation of certification of craftsman and technicians; (iii) Curriculum restructuring to meet the demands of the local and international markets; (iv) Limit foreign personnel to professional and supervisory staff; (v) Promote apprenticeship schemes and CVQs; and (vi) Establish a database of professionals and firms.	(i) Ready accessibility of Bonds; (ii) Ready accessibility of Insurance; (iii) Accessible and affordable credit; and (iv) Establishment of regional body to negotiate with EU firms, especially in respect to EPA opportunities.	(i) Regional eDatabase of procurement requests and advertisements; (ii) Process whereby Governments, developmental and lending agencies would provide information on development plans, proposals and tenders; and (iii) eTraining and other online services.	(i) Education and training; and (ii) ePlatform with information on trade agreements, negotiations, etc.	

**Plenary Session III – Presentation of Recommendations to the Lead Head of Government with Responsibility for Services, the Honourable Baldwin Spencer**

Chairman: The Honourable Baldwin Spencer

After more than eight (8) hours of deliberations, the delegates reconvened into plenary session to present, to the Prime Minister, their recommendations on the elements of the Draft Regional Strategic Plan for Services.

The moderator from each work group made a presentation on the major issues discussed and highlighted the recommendations proposed for the sectors covered.

In addition, the representative of the Caribbean Institute of Certified Management Consultants (CICMC) - Ms. Brenda Pope - made a brief presentation on the work being done by CICMC. In her overview, Ms. Pope outlined the context, partners, the activities and programmes being pursued to develop the industry in the Region. She opined that the Management Consultancy industry was an important one and that it should be treated as a regional priority sector for development. She also highlighted the global opportunities to be seized by regional management consultants, the strategic drivers and objectives, and a proposed strategy for the industry.

There was much interest shown on a proposal for the delivery of health care services presented by the moderator of Work Group III – Dr. Cornville Brown - which dealt with Health, Education, Environment, Cultural and Sporting Services. **Dr. Brown** stressed that it was important that the private sector played a greater role in the delivery of health care in the Caribbean and suggested that greater use should be made of incentives to achieve this. He opined that the focus should be on the gains to be had as a result of granting these incentives rather than what would be lost. He also opined that there was a need for a **Caribbean Brand of Health care**. To strengthen his argument, he informed the Meeting that, in The Bahamas, he headed a private hospital which provided specialised care for heart disease. He pointed out that the delivery of this service had reached such an advanced stage of development that it was possible to partner with the public sector to offer services to the general public at a subsidised rate.

This was however dependent of the grant of incentives on the specialised equipment used. Specifically, **Dr. Brown** argued that if incentives were granted on equipment used by the hospital, then the money saved could be used to provide the service to those who most need it but are least able to afford it. He also argued that the government could save money by having the service locally provided to citizens thus reducing the cost of sending them overseas.

The recommendations were formally received by the Prime Minister who then outlined the way forward.

### **The Way Forward**

**Prime Minister Spencer** opined that in his view the objectives which the Symposium set about to meet were indeed met. He thanked all the delegates for achieving such a feat. He indicated that the deliberations had generated such energy and it was critically important not to allow inertia to step in.

He then outlined the following activities that were planned to move the work towards the actual development and implementation of the Regional Strategic Plan for Services. These were –

- (i) The establishment of the administrative arrangements both at the national and regional levels to oversee the preparation and implementation of the Regional Strategic Plan for Services, namely -
  - (a) a Regional Project Steering Committee to formally consider the recommendations of the Symposium and make recommendations to the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED);
  - (b) the identification of national Focal Points and National Focal Point Persons;

- (c) the establishment of a National Coordinating Committee in each Member State.
- (ii) The conduct of an inventory of each Member State's Policies, Plans and Strategies for Services to assess whether or not there were any existing gaps between the recommendations of the Symposium and what was on the ground in Member States;
- (iii) The preparation of a work Plan for the next eighteen (18) months; and
- (iv) The convening of a workshop on Postal and Courier Services to make recommendations for the sector.

**Prime Minister Spencer** also expressed his deep gratitude to The United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for providing the funding for both the preparatory work as well as the conduct of the Symposium.

There were exchanges of congratulations after which the Symposium was declared ended.

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*Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat*  
6 May 2011

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**PROGRAMME**

***DAY I***  
***15 July 2009***

**8:00-9:00 a.m.**

**REGISTRATION**

**9:00- 9:50 a.m.**

**OPENING CEREMONY:**

**WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS:**

Amb. Colin Murdoch [**Chairman**]  
Permanent Secretary  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International  
Trade  
Antigua and Barbuda

**REMARKS:**

Mr. Lawrence Placide  
President  
Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Service  
Industries

H.E. Edwin Carrington  
Secretary-General  
Caribbean Community

**FEATURE ADDRESS:**

Hon. Baldwin Spencer  
Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda and  
Lead Head of Government with responsibility  
for Services

**SESSION I [PLENARY]**

**SERVICES, TRADE, AND DEVELOPMENT**

**CHAIRPERSON:** *Ms. Desiree Field-Ridley*  
*Adviser, Single Market and Sectoral Programmes, CARICOM Secretariat*

**10:00 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. PRESENTATIONS:**

**Services in the CARICOM Single Market and Economy and a Regional Strategic Plan for Development –**

Amb. Irwin LaRocque, Assistant Secretary-General, Trade and Economic Integration, CARICOM Secretariat

**Strategies for the Development of the Services Sector to Engage in the Liberalised International Economy –**

Ms. Martine Julsaint Kidane Deputy Head, Trade and Diplomatic Relations, UNCTAD

**10:45– 11:00a.m BREAK**

**The Services Agreement under the EPA**

Ms. Alyson Francis, Trade Counsel, Ministry of Finance and Planning, Economy and Energy, Foreign Trade and Cooperatives, Grenada

**The Role of the National Coalition in the Development of the Services Sector**

Ms. Michelle Hustler, Project Manager, Trade in Services, Barbados Coalition of Service Industries

**DISCUSSION**

**12:30– 2:00p.m. LUNCH**



**DAY II**  
**16 July 2009**

**SESSION II [PLENARY] (CONT'D)**  
**REGIONAL CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES CONFRONTING**  
**TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT IN SERVICES**

**9:00-11:00 a.m.**

**PANEL III**

*Dr. Cornville Brown [Moderator]*  
*Director, Cardiology and*  
*International Associates*  
*The Bahamas Heart Centre*

**Health and Related Services - Dr. Robert Mark Brohim**

**Education Services:**

- *Primary and Secondary Education* - **Dr. Didacus Jules**
- *Tertiary Education* - **Mr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie**
- *Vocational Education* - **Mr. Navneet Boodhai**

**Entertainment and Culture Services - Ms. Joanne Tull**

**Sporting Services - Ms. Carol Beckford**

**DISCUSSION**

**11:00-11:15 a.m.**

**BREAK**

**11:15 a.m.-1:00 p.m.**

**PANEL IV**

*Mr. Alfred Hawley [Moderator]*  
*President, St. Kitts and Nevis Coalition of Services Industries*

**Telecommunication Services - Dr. Hopeton Dunn**

**Computer and Related Services - Dr. Camella Rhone**

**Distribution Services:**

- *Wholesale, Retail Trade and Commission Agents* - **Mr. Derrick Reckford**
- *Franchising Services* - **Mr. Sydney Simmons**

**Postal and Courier Services - Ms. Dorcus Scantlebury**

**DISCUSSION**

**1:00- 2:30 p.m.**

**LUNCH**

**2:30-4:00 p.m.**

**PANEL V**

*Mr. Dennis Strong [Moderator]*

*President, Caribbean Institute of Certified Management Consultants*

|                                                           |   |                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| <b>Business Support Services</b>                          | - | <b>Mr. Jerry Blenman</b>         |
| <b>Other Business Services<br/>(Consultancy Services)</b> | - | <b>Dr. Lucretia Gabriel</b>      |
| <b>Professional Services</b>                              | - | <b>Mr. Grenville Phillips II</b> |
| <b>Environmental Services</b>                             | - | <b>Dr. Mark Griffith</b>         |
| <b>Construction Services</b>                              | - | <b>Prof. Clement Imbert</b>      |

**DISCUSSION**

**4:00-4:15 p.m.**

**BREAK**

**SESSION III**

**4:15 -6:15 p.m.**

**WORKING GROUPS:**

***Five Working Groups to be organised along the lines of the five Panels and make recommendations with respect to the following -***

- ***Legislative and Policy Framework;***
- ***Human Resources Requirements;***
- ***Financing Requirements;***
- ***Technological Needs; and***
- ***Cross Sectoral Linkages.***

**DAY III**  
**17 July 2009**

**SESSION IV [PLENARY]**  
**ELEMENTS OF A STRATEGIC PLAN AND PLAN**  
**OF ACTION**

**CHAIRPERSON:** Hon. Baldwin Spencer  
Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda and Lead Head of  
Government with responsibility for Services

**9:00-10:15 a.m.** **REPORTS OF THE WORKING GROUPS TO THE LEAD  
HEAD OF GOVERNMENT**

**10:15- 11:00 a.m.** **ELEMENTS OF DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN AND PLAN OF ACTION  
(2009– 2014) FOR SERVICES**

Amb. Irwin LaRocque  
Assistant Secretary-General, Trade and Economic  
Integration, CARICOM Secretariat

**11:00-11:15 a.m.** ***BREAK***

**11:15 a.m - 12:00 p.m.** ***DISCUSSION***

**CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS AND THE WAY FORWARD**

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**NOTES**

**Statement by Larry Placide at the Opening Session of the Regional Services Symposium – Antigua and Barbuda – July 15 2009**

It really is a pleasure to be in Antigua and Barbuda for this, the inaugural Regional Services Symposium and to be asked by the CARICOM Secretariat to say a few words at this opening session. The services sector is the most important sector in the region contributing as much as 90% of GDP in this country alone (Antigua). But then, I am preaching to the converted. Your mere presence at the symposium signals your understanding of the importance of the services sector to the region. This symposium is important to the private sector. It represents the coming together of important regional stakeholders to discuss and create policies to facilitate the growth of regional services businesses.

One of the most compelling arguments in favour of the CSME is that it should stimulate the growth of regional firms by facilitating the easier flow of goods and services. Chapter 3 of the Revised Treaty provides the legal basis for trade in services in the CSME. This Chapter refers to all four modes, and when it finally comes to fruition is intended to guarantee the free movement of CARICOM service providers as well as the right to establish a business in any CARICOM territory.

I have to say, that the private sector has become increasingly disenchanted with the lethargic pace of CSM implementation. It has been several years since CARICOM began to implement the free movement of persons, yet businesspersons continue to bitterly complain that entry into other CARICOM countries is based on the whim and fancy of

immigration officers. It still is easier to enter regional partners under the pretense of vacation than to enter as a service provider. But service providers, especially small businesspersons and individuals unfailingly express great interest in the Service Providers Certificate when that possibility is brought to their attention. This, by the way, could also be a useful approach to financing the growing services coalitions in the region.

The process of attaining a CARICOM Skills Certificate is long and we hear that the process, which is supposed to be uniform, varies from state to state. The question of what happens to the spouse and dependent children of a holder of a skills certificate who chooses to reside in another CARICOM state still remains unresolved. Service providers still have difficulty moving with their equipment from their home territory to another to provide services, facing difficulties both in their home and the receiving territory. In fact, some have even claimed that foreign competitors receive more facilitation than they do. Work on company registration appears to be proceeding but far too slowly. What will happen to the CARICOM Financial Services Agreement?

I could go on. But, I think the point has been made. Businesspersons in the Caribbean generally see the value in the CSME ideal but they also feel that some of the early momentum has been lost. I think it is fair to say that the private sector wants decisive action to be taken and is willing to play its part.

We therefore see this services symposium as the first step towards reversing our history of poor implementation of regional decisions. At the end of this meeting, we should leave not only understanding more about the needs of the regional service sectors BUT more

importantly, this meeting will, we hope, produce an action plan, with time-bound and measurable targets. These targets must be met if CARICOM hopes to restore the confidence of the business community which has long grown weary of unfulfilled promises.

But, we in the private sector also have to be facilitators of growth. Service suppliers throughout the region complain of difficulty in obtaining financing for business ventures. Generally, our financial institutions in the Caribbean continue to rely on a brick and mortar mentality. Often the most significant asset that service providers have is their intellectual property, an asset that is rarely valued accurately and thus not recognized by financiers. This is a critical issue, unless it is addressed, despite positive strides made in policy, the services sector will never reach its full potential due to the lack of commercial opportunity.

In addition, the recognition and enforcement of intellectual property rights is critical to the development of the services sector and the promotion of innovation in our societies. Trademarks are critical for the branding of services firms, yet there is no central regional agency responsible for the registration of trademarks in the region. Companies have to go from island to island registering trademarks. Copyright is critical to our musicians and cultural service suppliers and to consultants who copyright their work. Indeed the consultants who wrote the papers for this very conference all had their papers copyrighted to protect their intellectual property. Despite the importance of IP rights to our service providers in the region there is uneven recognition of IP rights, ranging from countries that are fully TRIPS compliant to countries that are non-compliant and have

minimal IP protection. Put plainly, businesses in the Caribbean need stronger IP protection NOW.

On November 15<sup>th</sup> 2008, the region signed the Economic Partnership Agreement, the first agreement that region signed that included a full services component. Later, we will hear about the EPA's provisions in detail. Here again, we call for quick implementation of the EPA and the finalization of the services agreement with the Dominican Republic to give CARICOM service providers the same or better access than European service providers enjoy. We also urge work on mutual recognition to proceed expeditiously and for countries to consider joint promotion strategies and institutions in Europe. As someone reminded me yesterday, !% of the European pie would be a quite tasty morsel for any Caribbean service provider.

I could go on. I have not even spoken of the need to improve services statistics or to support the national services coalitions or to improve regulations in the services sector or to provide opportunities through fair access to the government procurement systems in the region or to improve the opportunities for our graduates to encourage them to stay in the region or to consider ways to create more truly regional services companies. What's great about this occasion is that there are so many other capable persons who will contribute over the next three days to address these and other issues as well.

In closing, allow me to express gratitude to our host, Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer, who in a real sense made this happen. Prime Minister, we really welcome the commitment that you have shown to the services sector since assuming this regional

responsibility and pledge our commitment to this long-awaited and much needed process.

Thank you,

Wednesday, 15 July 2009