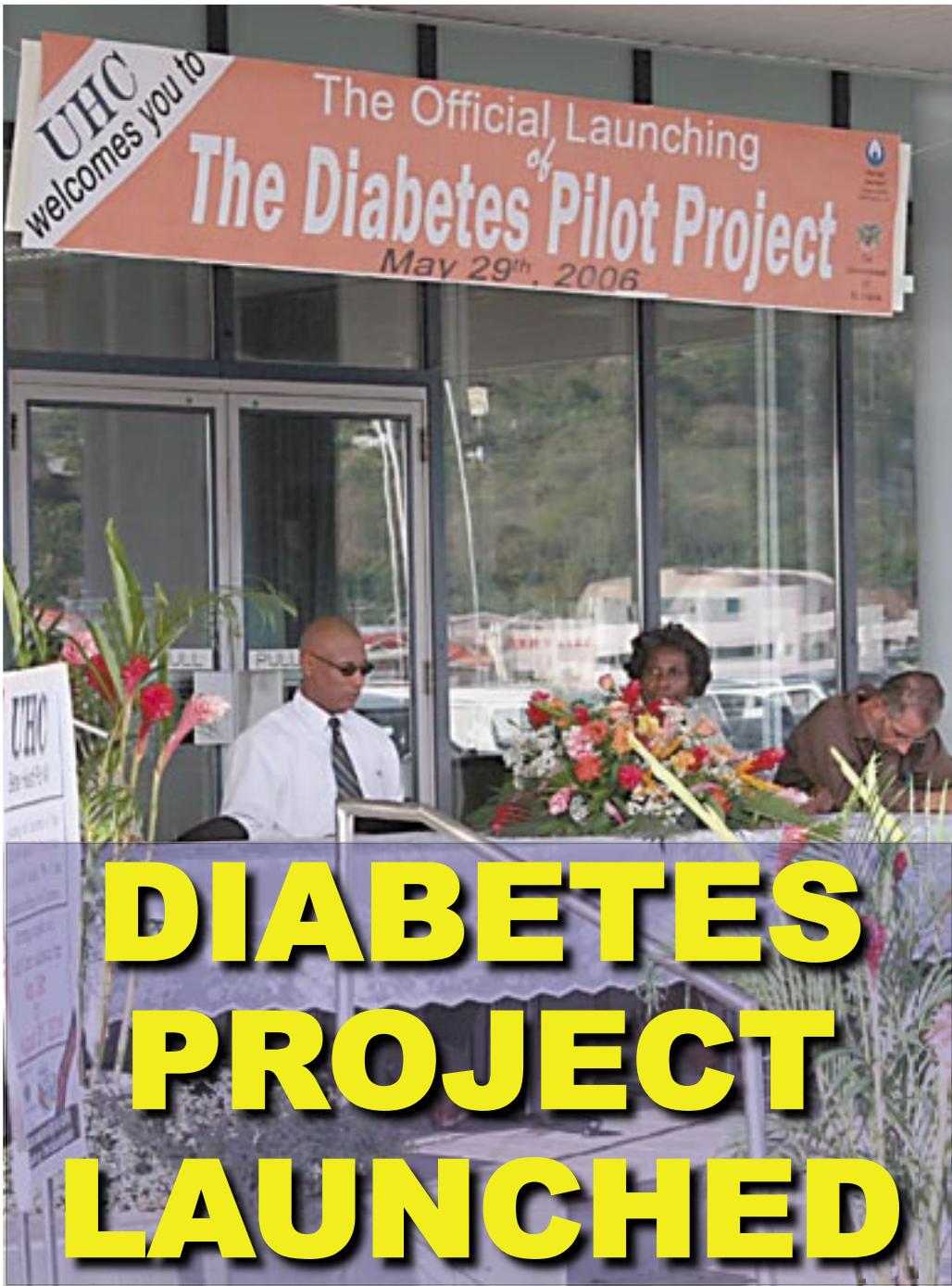




TWO GIANT STRIDES IN HEALTH CARE



DIABETES PROJECT LAUNCHED



CUBA TO TRAIN 300 NURSES

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THE CHALLENGES OF A NEW FISCAL INCENTIVES REGIME

ADDRESS BY HONOURABLE PHILIP J. PIERRE, MINISTER FOR COMMERCE, TOURISM, INVESTMENT AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE SAINT LUCIA CONFERENCE ON BEST PRACTICES IN THE USE OF FISCAL INCENTIVES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WTO RULES



Hon. Philip J. Pierre

Let me first thank Dr Kathy-Ann Brown, Legal Advisor at the Commonwealth Secretariat Special Advisory Services Division, Economic & Legal Section for spear-heading an initiative which the Government of Saint Lucia conceived some two years ago, the aim of which was to develop a new regime of fiscal incentives to assist in the development of the private sector. At the time of the request to the Commonwealth Secretariat, we ourselves were not yet fully seized of the magnitude of the task that we were inviting the Commonwealth Secretariat to undertake. However, having followed the process that you have been engaged in over the period, I am sure that it has been an exercise which has led to the discovery of new ideas that will assist, not only Saint Lucia, but fellow CARICOM states as we seek to find new ways to remain competitive in a world that has little compassion for inefficiency and low productivity.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank my former Permanent Secretary Mr Ben Emmanuel and the Deputy Permanent Secretary, Mr Titus Preville, for their commitment, leadership and willingness to follow the vision of enacting a New Fiscal Incentives Regime for St. Lucia.

This conference seeks to find ways and means to allow our small open economy to create an enabling environment for local and foreign investment by establishing a regime for fiscal incentives that while being compatible with WTO rules, will allow prospective investors to start up or expand their manufacturing enterprises in St. Lucia within the environment of a Caribbean Single Market and soon Economy.

St. Lucia's Fiscal Incentives Regime was enacted in 1974 at a time when manufacturing was basically the assembling of garments, electronic components and other similar products – value added was measured by labour content and the aim of the incentives was to allow the enterprises to reduce costs by the elimination of import duties and other taxes. To increase return on investment income, taxes were also reduced or eliminated. The aim therefore was to create an environment where costs would be reduced by direct reduction of government charges.

Infant industries were also incentivised by the direct use of protective measures like licences and quotas which limited or removed completely the element of competition from other countries.

The world has changed and we exist in a rules based trading system where the limitation of resources can no longer be the necessary and sufficient factor for our protection. The charge to this conference is how can we, within those rules based system, fashion a regime that can take due consideration of our size and resource base and allow us to attract investment within the CSME and the wider global economy.

The larger developed countries have not always taken due cognizance of our peculiar circumstances. The Special and Differential Treatment that we enjoyed in the past, through our relations with our major trading partners in Europe and North America, is now being re-examined and reworked to fit within the broader regional and global arrangements which must be WTO compliant. Our main export crop bananas, has been almost wiped out by new trading rules and requirements that are impossible for the majority of our farmers to comply with much less to operate under. The serious implications of these changes are that Saint Lucia and the rest of CARICOM must find new ways to foster economic growth and continue to attract foreign investment.

To survive in this new environment that will sustain economic development and an improved standard of living for our people, our industries and businesses must be competitive and to survive in a world which Michael Porter describes as a place where

“competition has intensified dramatically over the last decade in virtually all parts of the world. It was not long ago that competition was all but absent in many countries and in many industries.”

I alluded earlier to the changing pattern of trade from agricultural exports to services.

The World Bank reports that for the OECS as a whole service export, which accounted for on average seventy percent of total export earnings over the period 1980 to 2003, grew at the rate of ten percent per year while export of goods grew at the rate of three percent per year. Importantly, exports of goods have been much more volatile throughout the period than service exports. The emerging picture therefore is that the focus of competition in Saint Lucia and the rest of the OECS have moved towards the services sector.

A further review of the sector reveals that it is dominated by tourism and tourism related transport receipts. In St. Lucia, stay over arrivals increased by 6.5% in 2005 which was amongst the highest in CARICOM and tourism receipts measured by the restaurant and hotel sectors reached \$981 Million, an increase of over 10%. While this performance is commendable, St. Lucia cannot be complacent as the tendency is for tourism to become the dominant economic sector in most countries including our main source markets. The emerging picture therefore is one of competition and the need for strategies that will accelerate growth. It is fair to say that best practices in the use of Fiscal Incentives must of necessity concentrate on tourism services, investment and growth.

The Saint Lucian economy reveals a dominant tourism industry, a large subsistence based agricultural sector with a few key primary crops produced for domestic consumption and export. The main export crops being bananas exported mainly to the UK and cocoa exported to the EU and US. There is a small but significant manufacturing sector whose output as a percentage

of GDP is growing and is now equal to that of the banana industry. The construction sector is a major contributor with the rest of the economy made up of services other than tourism. More than seventy five (percent (75%) of the population is under forty five years. Most of the working population is literate but with little or an insufficient domestic capital base.

The production of goods is challenging due to the inability of our small companies to benefit from economies of scale and the intense competition. The challenge for our country is converting the potential output from largely educated youthful population into effective output.

At the macro-economic level, the economy has experienced growth from 2002 and reached 5.4% in 2005. Government has been able to keep the broad macro-economic framework stable with proactive policies aimed at improving the enabling environment for business in Saint Lucia. Saint Lucia operates a fixed exchange rate regime for the past decades, with the regional currency tied to the US dollar (\$1 US = 2.70 EC). The government has also lowered the level of corporate taxes paid to thirty percent while a programme to establish double taxation arrangements is being pursued with major trading partners. To help expedite and process business inquiries, a Director of Investment co-ordination has been appointed in the Ministry of Commerce, Investment and Consumer Affairs. Staff in the Ministry is dedicated to working with firms in every sector in the areas of investment facilitation and processing of incentives for the private sector. It is therefore against that background that this conference on best practices is being held here in Saint Lucia. In the first instance, the Government of Saint Lucia believes that the future of our economy would depend primarily on services but complemented by agriculture and manufacturing. The need to create and expand employment through the private sector is another objective of government policy. Opportunities must therefore be created for expansion of the economy in an environment lead by private sector growth. In this context, the need for a regime of sensible incentives that is transparent, easy to access and easily monitored is of utmost importance. We believe that the present and prospective enterprises need an incentives regime that will cater to the services sector in a manner similar to what is provided for the manufacture of goods under the existing incentives regime but is compatible to the changing environment of a rules based trading system.

It is clear that the rate of investment needed to achieve the desired economic growth rate will not be derived from within the domestic economy. There is an important role for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). We recognize that incentives in and of themselves are not necessarily the only factor that will lead to the attraction of FDI. The enabling environment which includes a sound macroeconomic framework, transparent policies, and minimal transactions costs are equally, if not more important to attracting FDI. But we also recognize that without an attractive incentives regime to support the conditions just outlined, our efforts to achieve our goals with respect to FDI could be equally frustrated.

Given the importance attached to the role of FDI, the Government of Saint Lucia, in collaboration with the Organization for Co-operation in Economic Develop-

ment (OECD), has developed an assessment of the business environment in Saint Lucia. A report on the findings of the work done will then serve as the basis to undertake any further reforms that may become necessary for improving the investment and business climate in Saint Lucia. Notwithstanding this report, we were acutely aware of the limitations of the existing incentive regime. It is this which led to the collaborative work done to date with the Commonwealth Secretariat on the revision of the incentives regime in Saint Lucia.

A review of the structure and performance of Investment Incentives in Saint Lucia has been completed. The study was conducted by CREDIT School of Economics of the University of Nottingham. The study examined investment incentives, policies and best practices with reference to small island states in the Caribbean, the effectiveness of investment incentives in Saint Lucia and the implications of the WTO Rules on subsidies in the context of the existing Fiscal Incentives Act of 1974. The findings of the study highlighted some areas of concern and given the limited economic base of the Saint Lucian economy the following questions were examined: (1) Are Saint Lucia's incentive schemes in line with emerging best-practices and the WTO rules on investment incentives; (2) Do the investment incentives in Saint Lucia have clearly stated objectives; (3) Are these objectives monitored; (4) Do the investment schemes meet their stated objectives.

This conference is therefore designed to facilitate an exchange of views among participants globally involved in implementing fiscal incentives programmes. This conference will address issues which attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI); the use of incentives in agriculture, services, and industry; best practices in the grant of investment incentives; specific concerns such as parity in the treatment of foreign and local investors, firm reporting requirements, monitoring, transparency, and the promotion of a rules-based versus discretionary approach.

Two other areas of importance include the use and application of fiscal incentives in Export Processing Zones (EPZs) and how the relevant WTO disciplines including subsidies and trade-related investment measures, impact on the use of fiscal incentives.

It is my hope that the results of this conference would be the final step in the process that will lead to enactment of a New Fiscal Incentive Act in St. Lucia to replace the 1974 Act.

Saint Lucia is deeply honoured to have been chosen as the host for this conference as this signals to the domestic, regional and international private sector that Saint Lucia is ready to undertake the required reforms to attract FDI in a manner consistent with its long-term development plans.

I am highly optimistic about the proceedings of this week. I hope that by the end of this conference, practical solutions will be found on ways to maximize the use of incentives to assist in the achievement of the development goals of the people of our countries.

Finally as Minister of Tourism, I invite you to get time to visit our Simply Beautiful St. Lucia.

I am pleased and honoured to declare the Saint Lucia Conference on Best Practices in the use of Fiscal Incentives in accordance with WTO Rules open. I thank you.

BE WARNED

ANOTHER ACTIVE HURRICANE SEASON AHEAD

MESSAGE FROM MR. JULIAN DUBOIS, DEPUTY DIRECTOR NEMO FOR THE OFFICIAL START OF THE 2006 ATLANTIC HURRICANE SEASON JUNE 1, 2006

Today, June 1 marks a significant threshold in our lives. It is the Official start of the Atlantic Hurricane Season; and as with all other years, this year 2006, as this date comes around we are forced to take time off our very engaging schedules and reflect on our individual and collective readiness and preparedness, to deal with and recover from, the destruction, Storms and Hurricanes can so easily heap upon us.

At the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO), this reflection is a daily routine of our job. For us, we are always in the Disaster Season and as such we continuously strive to ensure that as a Country we experience minimal loss of life and damage to property due to disaster events. June 1 however, the official start of the Atlantic Hurricane season, affords us an additional opportunity to reach out and



Mr. Julian Dubois



Destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina



Destruction caused by Hurricane Ivan

attempt to convince our citizens of the need to prepare for and to mitigate the potential negative impacts of destructive storms.

Most forecasts by the experts for this Hurricane Season indicate that the season will be a very active one. Their reasoning is that most of the climatic conditions forecasted for the current season are favorable for the development of more and stronger storms and therefore it is expected that the development of storms will be enhanced this year. Should we learn from the experiences of last year's Hurricane Season, we would realize that the region experienced about twice the number of storm systems, as was forecasted by the experts. Fortunately, we were spared, and none impacted us directly. The same cannot be said about some of our regional brothers and sisters who were severely battered.

As we anticipate the coming season with much trepidation and concern, we implore individuals to appreciate that notwithstanding the forecast of more Storms and stronger Hurricanes, a direct hit from one storm of 60 mph winds is all that is required to

destroy all the development gains that this country has made, and to set us back 20 years. Such a weather system would not qualify to be called a hurricane; however its impact could be devastating. We must appreciate the vulnerability of our housing stock and our agricultural sector to strong winds; we must appreciate the vulnerability of a large proportion of our coastal communities and tourism infrastructure to storm surge and strong waves.

We as individuals and individual agencies and corporations must begin developing and implementing plans to respond to the hazards which threaten us. We must also go further to plan to recover after a disaster event should we have been unfortunate enough to be impacted by one. Businesses which develop a plan to recover from disasters or a Continuity of Operations Plan (as it is called by some), are more likely to recover after disaster strikes relative to those which do not.

NEMO in collaboration with the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, under a Caribbean Disaster Emergency Relief Agency (CDERA) implemented project, was able to ensure that a train-

ing manual for safer buildings practices was developed and a number of artisans were trained in safer building practices. We are not certain that these skills are being utilized and exploited as much as we would like them to. Our buildings appear too vulnerable to strong winds. It must be remembered that with our roofs gone the contents of our houses also become vulnerable to the winds and rain. Many of our lower cost houses appear to just be sitting on their foundations. They are not tied down to them. We must endeavor to retrofit all of our structures to make them more resilient to storms and other hazards. The benefits of spending a small amount to retrofit and strengthen our buildings compared to losing it all to a storm and having to rebuild after, is enormous. We should all ensure that we are in a position to gain from that benefit. Let's retrofit.

Disaster Risk Reduction is a primary focal area for Disaster Management. It is NEMO's hope that our society begins to appreciate the need to factor into all our decision making, disaster risk reduction sensibilities. It calls for behavioral and attitudinal change

which is always a difficult proposition and always takes time. However, if we are to seriously engage in sustainable development, we must consider reducing our risk to hazards which threaten, in everything that we do. If we as individuals are able to make it a habit and practice of considering and incorporating disaster risk reducing actions into development projects and decisions that we make on a personal level, it is reasonable to expect that similar behavior would be exhibited when we act on behalf of agencies and corporations that we represent. Should we be able to realize this goal, although we will not ever be able to stop storms or reduce their strength or frequency, we would surely make our country more resilient to the negative impacts of storms and remain more steadfastly on the positive gradient of development.

With this I pray that we are once again spared this Hurricane Season, but should we not be that fortunate, I also pray that we suffer no loss of life, minimal damage to property and that we are resilient and recover quickly for the negative impact of any hazard. Thank You

TWO GIANT STRIDES IN HEALTH CARE

UHC DIABETES MANAGEMENT PROJECT LAUNCHED



Minister of Health Damian Greaves

The Universal Health Care – UHC – officially launched its diabetes pilot project on Monday. The project is the first step towards implementing the UHC programme. Chairperson of the UHC Task Force, Emma Hippolyte, says the pilot project is a test drive of the UHC.

The pilot will provide free screening and treatment for all St. Lucian's with diabetes. It is expected to run for nine months. Government is funding the pilot project at a cost of about \$3.1 million. The Task Force believes that 70% of the population would have been treated successfully at the end of the nine months.

At present, only 20% of diabetics and Hypertensive patients receive treatment and most do not get treatment early enough. Diabetes is the leading cause of death in St. Lucia. Hypertension is the fourth leading cause of deaths. It is estimated that there are 8,000 persons with diabetes in Saint Lucia and 20,000 persons with hypertension.

Health Officials are calling on the public to take advantage of the diabetes pilot project by checking with their community health centres for a blood

pressure test followed by a hypoglycaemic or sugar test.

The diabetes pilot project will provide the UHC team with the types of data to inform other aspects of UHC operations. The registration process is expected to help the UHC plan its capabilities realistically as well as assisting in procuring proper quantity of pharmaceuticals for the treatment of diabetes and other related diseases. Hippolyte says all drugs used for treatment will meet international standards and patient care will not be compromised.

A data collection process will run alongside the project to monitor changing statistics as the island wide screening programme becomes operational. This will be facilitated by way of computerised sites which the Ministry of Health in the process of erecting.

The Minister of Health Hon. Damian Greaves delivered the feature address at the launching of the project. The following is the text of his address.

Minister's Address

Today is a major milestone in the development of our health services. This launching of a pilot programme to

manage diabetes on a national level is also the pre-cursor to launching of an even bigger UHC programme.

Diabetes is the number one killer disease. 124 persons every year die of this disease and in addition Diabetes is a major contributor to death and the burden of disease for a number of other conditions including heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, peripheral arterial disease. Many of our people have lost their ability to walk because of diabetes.

We are applying a national disease management approach to diabetes. This means that we are establishing national standards and guidelines and then ensuring that all providers manage this disease in a similar, comprehensive manner. This management includes both public and private sectors. It also includes community and hospital services, with a comprehensive approach to diabetes including: (a) The prevention of diabetes through education on lifestyle from the earliest age and throughout life. Education on diet and exercise; (b) The prevention of complications of diabetes through early detection and early treatment. This Early detection would be conducted through mass population screening, recognising that diabetes is often silent. Early treatment through the provision of effective medications to all persons without any financial barrier (i.e. through public funding of the medications). Provision of this medication directed by our national guidelines which are evidence based. We also intend to treat existing hypertension since almost 70% of diabetics also have hypertension; (c) We will continue to offer and to improve our treatment of the complications of diabetes. However, through our aggressive programme of management we hope to reduce these complications and to detect these complications earlier thereby reducing the impact of the complications of the disease.

This pilot programme will teach us many lessons which will inform our

anticipated roll-out of the full UHC programme at the end of the pilot. The pilot is intended to run for nine months after which we will escalate the programme to implement the more comprehensive full UHC programme. The lessons learnt may inform the further phasing of the UHC. This we believe is a prudent approach, such that we ensure that public money is applied in the best possible manner.

This pilot programme is driving changes and capacity building throughout our health services. It has challenged us to increase the capacity in and better organise the pharmaceutical services. It has caused us to learn how to develop by consensus, national guidelines, thereby introducing an approach to standardising the quality of care in both public and private sectors. It is testing our approach to health care as detailed in our national strategic plan in which we establish national priority health areas which we implement through health teams in communities and in hospitals. It also challenges the central Ministry to establish the mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation. Further, this pilot is testing the ability of the Ministry to work with its major partner the NIC in a manner that will allow synergy in the interest of all.

Today is a good day. We have moved from talking to doing. Yes there will be difficulties ahead. However, I am encouraged by the commitment of the health workers to implement this programme. I want to congratulate them and assure them of my support as they forge ahead in our quiet revolution of our health services.

There is nothing more fundamental to the development of a people than the health services. This is now a recognised economic fact. Our country is in need of healing. The prescription is care and that is what we are delivering.

It gives me great pleasure to declare this pilot project officially launched.



Members of the Head table at the ceremony



Government Ministers (l-r) Jean, Finisterre, Rambally and Michel



Dr. Winston Parris (L) and Chief Elections Officer Carson Raggie

CUBA TO TRAIN THREE HUNDRED SAINT LUCIANS FOR NURSING CAREERS



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony being welcomed by President Fidel Castro

Over three hundred Saint Lucians will receive training in basic nursing from the Government of Cuba. This is one of results of a five day official visit to Cuba by a local delegation led by Prime Minister Hon. Dr. Kenny D. Anthony.

At a meeting with President Castro, Prime Minister reported on the measures taken by Government to improve the health sector including the construction of major modern health facilities and the extensive programme of refurbishing of health centres island-wide.

Having regard to the numerous pressures on the existing pool of nurses through migration, President Castro agreed to accept three hundred young Saint Lucians to pursue nursing training at institutions in Cuba. The programme is scheduled to start in October this year, but successful candidates will be expected to leave Saint Lucia on June 20th to pursue an intensive three month Spanish language programme prior to the commencement of the two year nursing course. The Government of Saint Lucia will also discuss with the Cuban authorities, the possibility of the top performers going onto to pursue advanced training.

The full cost of the training will be met by the Government of Cuba. However Prime Minister Anthony has stated that Government is willing to offer a small stipend to the successful students.

The Ministries of Education and Health will coordinate the recruitment of the candidates for the training and further information will be provided to the public later this week.

Also taking part in the discussion with the Cuban president were Senator Petrus Compton, Minister of External Affairs, International Trade and Civil Aviation, Hon. Jon Odlum Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Health Human Services and Gender Affairs.

Highlights of the official tour to Cuba were visits to the "Marina Hemingway" Centre of the Miracle Operation, and the Pando Ferrer Ophthalmology Institute, and discussions with the senior government officials at the Revolution Palace.

The delegation was led by Prime Minister Hon. Dr. Kenny D. Anthony and included, Mr. Joseph "Reds" Pereira of the Saint Lucia Boxing Association, representatives of the local media and the Department of Information Services.



Some of the guests at the ceremony



TOBACCO IS DEADLY

WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY MESSAGE

FROM MINISTER OF HEALTH HON. DAMIAN GREAVES

May 31st, has been designated by the World Health Organization as “World No Tobacco Day”. This day is recognized by countries around the world as an opportunity to raise awareness about the detrimental and devastating effects of tobacco. It is also used as an occasion to exhort tobacco users to refrain from use, for one day, as a step towards total abstinence altogether. The theme of this year’s “World No Tobacco Day” is : “Tobacco : Deadly in any form or disguise.”

This theme is extremely relevant for several reasons, most important among which are the following :

(1) it clearly points out the true nature of tobacco and tobacco products : the word used is deadly. The meaning of this word according to the New Oxford Dictionary of English is “causing or able to cause death”.

Twantenyen May toulezanne se jounen modial kont lafimen tabak. sa se an jou laté-a ka méte asou koté pou fe tout moun sav mannye lafimen sigawet ek tabak ka detwi lavi moun ek ka enkouwajé moun pou westé lwen lafimen sigawet ek tabak. tem-la ki chwazi pou lanné sala sé: “sigawet eben tabak ka tjwé an nepot mannye i pwezante ko’y”. Tem sala enpotan piski i ka moutjwé fos danjwé sigawet danjwé.

There is something else that I feel duty bound to reveal to you, and it is this; do you know that cigarettes and other tobacco products are the only consumer goods in the world that are guaranteed to kill half the people who use them, even if or especially if, they are used according to the manufacturer’s instructions? Think about it; every cigarette you smoke brings you or someone with whom you spend a lot of time, a little bit closer to disease and painful death.

Few ek se, sent lisyen kon mwen menm, la ni an bagay mwen obligé di’w. Es ou sav sigawet ek lot podwi tabak sé sel podwi ki konsoumé peyi-a ka sevi ki asiwé pou tjwé an dimi an sé moun-la ki ka sevi’y, menm si yo sevi’y silon diweksyon biznis-la ki ka podwi’y? Katjilé asou sa. Chak sigawet ou finen ka mennen-ou eben an moun ki pwe’w pli pwé maladi ek lanmo.

(2) The other reason why the theme “Tobacco : deadly in any form or disguise” is so relevant is that it alludes to one of the tactics or strategies used by tobacco companies to get people to start using and to continue using cigarettes and other tobacco products. This strategy as the theme indicates, rests



Hon. Damian Greaves

upon the presentation of the deadly products in a manner which suggests that they are less lethal than they really are. this is what the words like “Kool”, “Light”, and “Menthol” to name a few are supposed to do. They are supposed to make us think, they are actually supposed to make us believe that Kool cigarettes, or Light cigarettes or Menthol cigarettes are safer; that they in some way will cause us less HARM, that their ill effects will not be as great as “normal” cigarettes”.

This is one of the greatest deceptions of the Tobacco Industry. Cigarettes Kill and no amount of disguises can diminish that fact.

Lot wéson ki fe tem-la otan apopyab se piski i ka moutje kantité tactic se kompani-an ka sevi pou fe moun koumansé ek kontiné finen sigawet. yo ka sevi apoch sala pou pwezanté an podwi ki otan danjewe kon “kool” “light eben leje” ek “menthol”. Pa gade tout sa yo ka di konmkwé i kool, yo tout ka fe menm kalité ek kantité donmaj.

Today, I want everyone to know that cigarettes kill, that all tobacco products kill.

I also want you to know that because the government of saint Lucia is aware of this, and because the health and well being of our people are our most important concerns, we have taken measures to provide the necessary protection for our people. One of these measures is

that in November 2005, late last year, Saint Lucia became party to the first ever Public Health Treaty in the whole world; the “World Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.”. the dangers posed by tobacco and tobacco products are so great that it has been necessary to develop a health treaty, so that all nations of the world could have a unified, comprehensive plan to minimize and eventually eliminate the danger of tobacco.

Jodia, mwen vlé tout moun sav ki sigawet ek lot podwi tabak ka tjwé. Ek piski gouvedman sent lisi ni anchay lantewe an sante pep peyi-a, nou ja pwan disizyon depi novanm lanne pasé, le sent lisi siyé agweman santé piblik pou kontolé lafimen sigawet ek tabak. Gouvedman ka pwan sante moun ki afekte pa lafimen sigawet byen sewyé.

The Framework Convention aims to stop this global epidemic of disease, disability, losS OF productivity and death, caused by the use of tobacco products. The convention proposes the use of various price and non price measures such as increases in taxation and prices as well as changes in labeling of the products such as cigarette boxes. these are some of the things that we will be implementing as we endeavour to safeguard our health and well being.

On this day, “World No Tobacco Day” 2006, we ask you to join us; to

show your commitment to the development of our nation, by taking one step; by not smoking today, by not using any tobacco product today. We all have a right to breathe clean air and we all have a responsibility to protect our health and that of our loved ones. Let us together step into a brighter, healthier tomorrow with cleaner, fresher air.

Konvensyon sala ki gouvedman ja siyé kont malidI, dezabilite, pedant abilite twavaye ek lanmo annekonz pa sevis podwi tabak, ka eseye meté pli tax asou sigawet ek difewan ekwiti ek avetisman asou se bwet sigawet-la. sa se adan se apoch-la gouvedman ka sevi pou potejÉ santÉ pep peyi-a. jodia, nou ka mandé w pou wendé kow ek sipoté developman peyi-a. annou fe an efo pou doubout finen jodia. nou tout ni an dwa pou espiwe sa ki net ek nou osi ni an weskonsabilite pou potejé anmi nou.

Together we can put an end to disease and death. We must be committed, we must be steadfast, we must expose the truth; Tobacco is deadly in any form or disguise. So today, let us celebrate life, let us say “No” to tobacco and let us stop the march of death.

Our lives are infinitely more important than the profits of tobacco companies, even though they would have us believe otherwise. Let us draw the LINE; If you don’t smoke, don’t start and if you smoke quit! You can do it.....we can do it. If you have any questions or need help, please call the Substance Abuse Secretariat at 451 8990 or 453 0038, or you can visit THE SECRETARIAT upstairs RBTT on Micoud Street, Castries.

Together we can make it happen, I look forward to working with every single one of you towards a healthier, better St. Lucia.

Si nou mete tet nou ansanm, nou sa doubout maladi sala ek jik lanmo. nou ni pou ni an konmitman ek pale laviwite. sigawet ek lot podwi tabak ka tjwe an nepot fason. alo, jodia, annou selebwe lavi, annou di “non” pou sigawet ek podwi tabak ek annou doubout se lanmo-a ki annekonz pa lafimen sigawet ek lot podwi tabak.

Lavi nou twop pli enpotan pasé pofi se go kompani sigawet-la. Si ou pa ka finen, pa koumansé! Ek si ou ka finen, sa se le-a pou ou doubout! Ou sa fe’y! Si ou ni pyes kesyon eben si ou bizwen asistans kwijé biwo abizman dwog a limowo telefon 451 8990 eben 453 0038 eben ou sa vizite yo anho gwiyen bank rbbt asou lawi micoud an kastwi. Si nou twavay ansanm, i sa fet. Anou fe sent lisi pli meyé an santé pou nou tout!

A NOTE FROM WHO

Tobacco is the second major cause of death in the world. It is currently responsible for the death of one in ten adults worldwide (about 5 million deaths each year). If current smoking patterns continue, it will cause some 10 million deaths each year by 2020. Half the people that smoke today -that is about 650 million people- will eventually be killed by tobacco.



OECS Ministers of Trade Meet in Dominica

Ministers of Trade from the OECS held a two day meeting at the Fort Young Hotel in Roseau Dominica from Wednesday May 31st. Their meeting was preceded by the Twelfth Meeting of the OECS Trade Negotiations Group. The Trade Negotiations Group is comprised of trade officials, representatives of the private sector and the OECS Secretariat. Its main objective is to assist Member States in managing their external trade relations by, amongst other things, facilitating the formulation of positions on external trade negotiations.

Ministers and officials discussed matters related to the ongoing negotiations at the World Trade Organisation and the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) that is being negotiated with the European Union. During the course of this year, the OECS along with other Member States of CARICOM and the Dominican Republic will define the structure and scope of the EPA by exchanging concessions with the EU in services, industrial goods and agriculture and trade related issues.

Ministers considered the feasibility of concluding a free trade agreement with the United States of America and also received a report on activities undertaken by the Commonwealth Secretariat Funded “Hubs and Spokes” Project which is geared towards increasing the capacity of governments to formulate and implement trade policy.

CARICOM SG Concludes Productive Suriname Mission

CARICOM Secretary-General His Excellency Edwin Carrington and a team of Officials of the CARICOM Secretariat completed a three-day official visit to Suriname on Wednesday 24 May 2006, as guests of His Excellency President Runaaldo Ronald Venetiaan and his government.

The Secretary-General and his team met with the President, Ministers of Government, and senior government officials, Vice President, H.E. Ramdien Sardjoe, Chairman of the National Assembly, H.E. Paul Somohardjo, Members of the National Assembly, and delegation from the State Council, the Suriname Chambers of Commerce, the Trade and Industry Association, the Manufactures Association of Suriname, and was the guest of a business lunch hosted by the Central Bank of Suriname, the Bankers’ Association, and the Association of Insurance Companies.

A significant element of the Secretary-General’s mission was the inclusion of the CARICOM Technical Working Group on Governance, led by its chairman Professor Vaughn Lewis, of the University of the West Indies, and including Professor Denis Benn, also of the University of the West Indies, and Dr. Barton Scotland, Legal and Foreign Affairs specialist.

At a special evening session, the Secretary-General responded to in-depth and insightful questioning from students of the University of Suriname, Institute of international Relations, Non governmental organisations and other parties interested in CARICOM issues.

In the initial meeting with President Venetiaan, Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Lygia Kraag Keteldijk, Minister of Trade and Industry, H.E. Clifford Marica, Officials to the Cabinet of the President and of both Ministries, the Secretary-General described participation in the CARICOM Single Market as “the way forward for the Caribbean Community”.

On 1 January, Suriname was one of the six original members of the CARICOM Single Market, along with Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

Suriname has confirmed its policy of non-discrimination in relation to CARICOM Nationals and their right to enter, live and work. Suriname is also the first CARICOM Member State to issue a CARICOM passport.

Significant announcements during the visit include the siting of the CARICOM Competition Commission in Paramaribo by mid-2007 and the proposed establishment of a CARICOM Institute of Translation and Interpretation, also in Suriname.



Edwin Carrington

NEMO’s Hazard Mitigation Plans

The National Emergency Management Organisation [NEMO], along with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency [CDERA] and the Caribbean Development Bank [CDB] held at a two day workshop on Monday and Tuesday to discuss the development of St. Lucia’s national hazard mitigation plan. The workshop was held at the the Bay Gardens Inn.

CDERA, through its Caribbean Hazard Mitigation Capacity Programme (CHAMP), and the CDB, through its Disaster Mitigation Facility for the Caribbean (DMFC), have embarked with the Governments of Grenada, Belize and Saint Lucia to develop national hazard mitigation plans.

The rationale for this week’s workshop was to provide the Plan Development Committees (PDCs) with an understanding of the findings of the preceding phases of the national hazard mitigation plan development process and through working groups and plenary sessions, refine the remaining planning tasks required to produce national hazard mitigation plans documents by August 15, 2006.

The objectives of the workshop were: (a) To familiarize participants with the results of the vulnerability assessment conducted for critical facilities; (b) To understand the range of mitigation measures that should be considered by the PDCs for inclusion in the national mitigation plans; (c) Provide the PDCs with the necessary tools to evaluate and prioritize mitigation actions; (d) Explain how the Model Framework can support the development of the mitigation strategy, implementation mechanisms and annual action plans.

Saint Lucia presently has a Hazard Mitigation Policy and Plan both adopted by the National Emergency Management Advisory Committee [NEMAC]. The final stage shall be to take the Documents to the Cabinet of Ministers.

HIV/AIDS And Human Rights Advocates Develop Strategy

Human Rights and HIV/AIDS advocates from across the Caribbean met in Kingston, Jamaica on 25 to 26 May 2006 at a workshop to develop strategies for rights based responses to HIV/AIDS epidemic in the Caribbean.

The workshop was convened by the Pan Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS (PANCAP) Law, Ethics and Human Rights project in collaboration with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), as part of its Enhanced Support to HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean (ESAC) programme.

Among the stated objectives of the workshop is “to develop a strategy for regional advocacy in HIV/AIDS issues and examine practical opportunities for action at national and regional levels with particular reference to the findings of the national assessments.”

In this regard, the workshop, among other issues, assessed the strengths and weaknesses of civil society’s involvement in design and implementation of national responses to HIV/AIDS and identified a set of human rights priorities for action in the field of HIV/AIDS.



Donation to Cadet Corps

On Tuesday, May 29, 2006, The Captain and members of the cruise ship, FREEWINDS, made a donation of 26 mattresses to the St. Lucia Cadet Corps, following a request from the cadets for assistance with the Corps’ preparation for the 2006 National Summer Camp.

This year the Barbados Cadet Corps will also hold their summer camp in St. Lucia, and the St. Lucia Cadet Corps is expected to host some 180 cadets from Barbados. This will be in addition to the 150 cadets anticipated from St. Lucia. The local Cadet Corps is therefore seeking every possible assistance in order to be able to comfortably house all the cadet and make the camp a success.

GROS ISLET HIGHWAY PROJECT

A CALL TO THE MEDIA

The Ministry of Communications, Works, Transport and Public Utilities has called on the local media to assist it in the dissemination of the correct information on one of its most challenging current projects - the rehabilitation of the Castries/Gros-Islet Highway.

Work on the Castries/Gros-Islet Highway has started with the installation of 14 inch pipelines, the cutting of trees and the commencement of work on the Choc Roundabout. The Highway will involve the transformation of the present route to a four-lane highway, from Paul's Gas Station to the Union Junction.

Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Communications, Works, Transport and Public Utilities Ben Emmanuel thinks that the Ministry's proactive approach to providing information about on-going government projects could be greatly strengthened with the partnership of the local media.



The developing union roundabout



"We are available to talk with the press on all aspects of the project. I want in particular to say that you should feel free to call the officials and get the information from source and to verify information so that what you put out to the public will in-fact be coming from official sources," said Mr. Emmanuel.

Mr. Emmanuel said though the Castries Gros Islet highway Rehabilitation project is a very challenging one, it is by no means beyond the ministry's ca-

pability to execute. He said the general approach to the project is one of collaboration, coordination and partnership building. He said it is for this reason that the ministry has established a project Monitoring Committee—made up of key stakeholders.

"That monitoring committee comprises representatives from the private sector, the Chamber of Commerce, the Small Business Association, the SL-HTA, Manufacturers Association, key

agencies of government—such as the ministries of Education, Physical Development, Finance as well as representative of the Utility companies, the contractor, consulting engineer and the National Council on Public Transport," he said.

Mr. Emmanuel says the work of that committee is critical to ensuring all stakeholders are involved in all stages of the project and can as a result address problems associated with its execution.

SAINT LUCIA HOSTS CWC 'S IX VENUE SUMMIT

As preparations intensify for the hosting of the ICC's Cricket World Cup in the West Indies in March -April 2007, St. Lucia will next week host the ICC's IX Venue Summit. The summit will be held from the 5 - 9th June and will bring together representatives of the all Local Organising Committees in the territories staging the matches in the tournament. These Committees will give updates on the status of their venues, that is the stadium facilities and the precinct areas. A number of countries are building new stadias for the World Cup

while others, like St. Lucia's Beausejour Cricket Ground are being significantly upgraded.

The Summit will also examine the other important sector areas being handled by the Local Organising Committees. These include: Event Management - The hosting of LOC's events before and during the games; Tournament IT - Telecommunication needs and challenges; Corporate Communications - Public Education Plans and updates on the Country's preparedness; Ticketing and Commercial; Hospitality - Updates on accommodation issues and transportation; Medical; Volunteers; and Cricket Operations

The Venue Summit will also provide an opportunity for local journalists to interview some of the ICC representatives and the following interviews have been organised for the media: Monday 5th June - Don Lockabie at Beausejour Ground (Pavilion) 3.15 pm - 3.30 pm (topic - Venue Updates); Tuesday 6th June - Marvia Roach - Bay Gardens 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm (topic - Corporate Communications); Wednesday 7th June - LOC CEOs - Beausejour 5.00 pm (Press Conference); Thursday 8th June - Michael Hall - Beausejour 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm (topic - Cricket Operations).



THIS WEEK ON NTN

Sat. June 3rd to Fri. June 9th, 2006
NTN - PROVIDING

INFORMATION YOU NEED

Do you need specific information about pensioners? Then find out from pensioners themselves - Sat. May 27th, 11:30 a.m.

Youth Agenda: The government of Saint Lucia details its efforts for assisting young persons - Sun. May 28th., 10:30 a.m.

The NIC explains the concept of the Emerald Housing Development and fields questions from potential buyers - Mon. May 29th - 9:00 p.m.

Repositioning Agriculture: The Agro-Tourism Link - Tues. May 30th 6:15 p.m.

The Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) - Strategizing for Gender Equality - Wed. May 31st., 6:15 p.m.

Get the inside details of the National Community Foundation's Services during 2005 - Thurs. June 1st, 8:30 p.m.

REBROADCAST: Town Hall Tuesday with Hon. Philip J Pierre - Fri. June 2, 9:00 p.m.

Remember to tune in for: GIS News Breaks and Kweyol News daily from 6:30 p.m.

Issues & Answers/Mondays at 8:00pm:

Interview/Tuesdays at 6:15pm : Konsit Kweyol/Tuesdays at 8:00pm (Kweyol Discussion):

Your Right to Know/Thursdays at 6:15 p.m. (Min. of Ed. Prog).

Take 2/Fridays at 6:15pm (Week in Review)

Weflechi/Fridays at 6:40pm - (Week in Review—Kweyol)

For the complete programme guide, log on to our website at www.stlucia.gov.lc and then click on the NTN icon.

www.stlucia.gov.lc

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