



NATIONWIDE

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SAINT LUCIA'S NEW CABINET OF MINISTERS

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ADDRESS BY SIR JOHN COMPTON AT HIS SWEARING IN CEREMONY AS



Prime Minister Sir John Compton delivering address

My People of Saint Lucia, Ladies and Gentlemen. Thank you for your support at Monday's General Election. When I addressed you on the eve of the Election I asked you to make an important choice.

You have made that choice. You have chosen the United Workers Party. By that choice you have placed a tremendous responsibility on my shoulders and it is a responsibility that I accept with humility and with a determination to justify your confidence and that trust that you have placed in me and my Party.

As I joined our jubilant supporters in the William Peter Boulevard on Monday night I could feel the joy of the thousands of persons who had been holding their breath waiting to exhale, and who could now do so with the confirmation of the victory of the United Workers Party at the polls. There is a general feeling that a weight has been lifted from the very soul of the people of St. Lucia. But, this is not the time to dwell on our triumph. It is a time to focus on the road that lies ahead and on the many challenges that confront our nation.

The Priorities

You have made it clear, that the main issues of concern to you are crime, unemployment, and the restoration of sound management of the finances of the country and we therefore have no doubt as to what our priorities should be. In keeping with the provisions of

the Constitution, I have been invited by Her Excellency, the Governor General to form a Government and by this simple ceremony I have been sworn in as Prime Minister. In the coming days I will appoint persons to hold the office of Minister in the various Ministries and departments of Government and will make appointments to the many Boards of statutory corporations that form part of the machinery of governance of our country.

In order to do this I expect the co-operation of members of these Boards and ask them to put their positions at the disposal of the Prime Minister.

As we move to address the development agenda that is before us, we have an obligation to put behind us the years of political tribalism that have been so glaringly demonstrated in the events of recent weeks. We must renew our country, based on the recognition that the national interest takes precedence over individual or party political positions. I pledge that this Government will be the Government of all the people of St. Lucia. We must now harness our scarce human and material resources behind the common national cause and engage the energies of all Saint Lucians in the process of national development, allowing each person to make the contribution of which he or she is capable. As a nation, we must pursue this course or face the consequence of increasing marginalization and decline in a world where the priorities are being determined more and more, by the dictates of globalization and where the needs of small countries such as our own may be overlooked.

The Promises of our Manifesto

In our Manifesto we promised to structure the economy to achieve the high rates of economic growth that are necessary to reduce unemployment, to improve standards of living throughout the society and to generate the income required to finance the social and development programmes that will distribute the nation's wealth equitably among all its citizens.... We will keep this promise. We have promised to put an end to financial mismanagement and wastage of public funds that so outraged us all.... We will keep this promise. We have promised to target the creation of at least 7,000 new jobs in the growth sectors of tourism and information technology and this promise too, we will keep. All of our efforts to create new jobs will depend heavily on having a trained workforce and in this regard, we will invest heavily in the training and re-training of our people to enable them to meet the requirements for employment in this era of globalization and of the CSME. As we promised in our Manifesto we will revisit the Labour Code and will give adequate time to the trades union and employers, as well as the general public, to consult, with the view to introducing a Labour



Governor General Dame Pearlette Louisy welcomes PM to Government House



Prime Minister Compton being sworn in and signing register

Code that is acceptable to all parties, so that labour relations are removed from a basis of conflict and confrontation and placed on a firm foundation of conciliation and consensus.

The 2007/2008 Budget

Very soon, we will begin the process required to prepare the Budget for the

financial year 2007/2008 and our main priority will be to find savings that will enable the reduction of Government's annual recurrent expenditure from present levels and use such savings for the development of our country. These savings must be found, as it is not the intention of this new UWP Administra-

PRIME MINISTER OF ST. LUCIA, FRIDAY 15TH DECEMBER, 2006



(top) Dame Pearlette affixes her signature and (bottom) shakes hands with Sir John at the end of the ceremony

tion to introduce new taxes or to place the country further in debt. We are confident that we can realize this objective by the elimination of the unnecessary, wasteful and extravagant expenditure that was the hallmark of the former Administration. I take the opportunity to repeat that these savings will not be

realized at the expense of the jobs of career public servants. The 2007/2008 Budget will be the platform from which we will launch our efforts to implement the pledges and promises contained in our Manifesto as it will establish the financial provisions for the programmes and projects that we wish to introduce.

The Campaign Against Crime

One immediate priority will be to start the campaign against crime, that will be based on a zero-tolerance approach to crime at all levels in the society, and we will give the Police a free hand to do their duty within the law. We will also establish an independent Police Complaints Commission to safeguard the rights of the public. The establishment of a safe and secure society through the control of crime is necessary not only for the growth of our economy but also for the development of our society. We will put an end to the day-to-day political interference in the Police Force, and make the Police and the Courts fully responsible for dealing with crime and criminals. A series of consultations will be held with the churches and all social partners to address the subject of the restoration of discipline in schools and the need to turn the tide of decline in the moral and social fabric of the country.

Supporting Local Businesses

We will, without delay, initiate the arrangements leading to the re-establishment of a National Development Bank that will provide support for locally owned businesses and for nationals seeking to invest in new areas of economic activity. Similarly, we will move to establish a Unit Trust company to encourage investment by Saint Lucians. We will also move quickly to consolidate the various banana companies into one strong entity that will be in a position to benefit from economies of scale and to take full advantage of the opportunities for earning foreign exchange that still exist in that industry.

Education And Health

Work will start immediately on the implementation of the Universal Secondary Education System started by the UWP that provides comprehensive academic, vocational and technical education and we will initiate discussions with the University of the West Indies aimed at transforming Sir Arthur Community College into a full-fledged University within three years. The success of our strategy for education depends on the teachers and we will undertake a full assessment of the working conditions for teachers with a view to improving them so that we can retain our teachers in whose training we intend to invest a great deal. As part of this process we will re-introduce study leave with pay for teachers as well as for other public servants. We will also pay salaries to teachers during their basic training. In the area of Health we intend to fully implement a National Health Service that is comprehensive in scope and will also train nurses and other personnel to support this service. We will pay salaries to nurses during their basic training.

Tourism

In our Manifesto we have stated our

intention to make Castries, Vieux-Fort and Soufriere duty-free shopping areas. We also intend to construct new cruise ship berths in Castries, Soufriere and Vieux-Fort and, by relocating all commercial cargo to a new port to be built at Cul-de-Sac, we intend to convert Castries into a dedicated cruise ship port and regional duty-free shopping destination. Planning for these initiatives will commence without delay. These, and the other initiatives that we propose, will create numerous new jobs and investment opportunities for Saint Lucians, and build the economic and infrastructural capacity of the country, for long term growth and development in a globalized world.

On Returning To Public Life

As I have stated previously, my return to public life has only one purpose, and that is to restore our country's fortunes and to ensure a bright and secure future for our people and especially for our children. I thank you again for your vote of confidence that you have so clearly demonstrated, by electing the United Workers Party to office, and I ask you for your continued support. I also wish to thank my colleagues who have walked the long, rugged road with me.

The road ahead is not one that can be traveled by an elected Government alone... that Government must have the ongoing support of the entire nation if its efforts are to be successful.

My pledge to you, is that this Government of the United Workers Party is committed to the cause of bringing a meaningful improvement to the standard of living in St. Lucia and will do everything in its power to justify the confidence that you have resposed in us.

I thank God for giving me the health and the strength to carry out the task ahead. I am encouraged by the words of Isaiah the Prophet: "He gives strength to the wearied, The young may grow tired and weary, Youth may stumble and fall but those who hope in the Lord shall renew their strength, He shall raise them on eagle's wings, And bear them on the breath of the dawn He will make them shine like the sun And hold them in the palm of his hand They will run and not grow weary, They will walk and not tire."

This is my prayer as I assume this awesome responsibility. As we enter the festive season and wish each other peace and a bright and prosperous new year, let us work together to make this wish come true. Let us wish each other Peace, but let us say that this begins with me. I assume this responsibility with malice towards none, but Peace to all persons of goodwill. I again thank you for your support and ask of you nothing but your goodwill and your prayers. Thank you, and may this season of Peace usher in a new year of Progress for our country.

SAINT LUCIA'S NEW CABINET OF MINISTERS



Minister for Home Affairs and Internal Security – Dr. Keith Mondesir



Minister for Housing, Urban Renewal and Local Government – Mr. Richard Frederick



Minister for Education and Culture – Mr. Arsene James



Minister for Social Transformation, Youth and Sports – Mr. Lennard Montoute



Minister for Health and Labour – Mr. Stephenson King



Minister for Agriculture, Lands, Fisheries and Forestry – Mr. Ezekiel Joseph



Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture – Marcus Nicholas



Minister in the Ministry of Education and Culture – Senator Gaspard Charlemagne



Minister Trade, Industry and Commerce – Mr. Guy Mayers



Minister for Communications, Works, Transport and Public Utilities – Mr. Guy Joseph



Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Investment, Information and Broadcasting – Mr. Rufus Bousquet



Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation – Senator Allen Chastanet



Minister for Economic Planning, Development and The Public Services – Senator Ausbert D’auvergne



Minister in the Ministry of Social Transformation – Senator Tessa Mangal



Minister in the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce – Edmund Estephane

REMARKS BY HONOURABLE SIR JOHN G M COMPTON ON THE OCCASION OF THE FORMAL SWEARING OF THE CABINET OF MINISTERS, PRIME MINISTER’S RESIDENCE, DECEMBER 19, 2006



Prime Minister Sir John Compton announcing his Cabinet

Your Excellency the Governor General, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Your Lordship Mr. Michael Gordon, acting Chief Justice, Ladies and Gentlemen, people of Saint Lucia.

I wish to thank Her Excellency for graciously consenting to preside over the ceremony and for forgiving the breach of protocol in the choice of venue.

I extend a special welcome to my very good friend, Sir James Mitchell, the former Prime Minister of St Vincent and the Grenadines, who for much of my public life walked the road with me, and whose career was almost the exact replica of my own. Sir James has only recently returned from London where he launched the chronicle of his experience in a book entitled “Beyond the Islands”. I hope soon to do the same.



Sir James Mitchell

A few days ago, on the 15th of December, many of you were present when Her Excellency charged me with the duty of selecting members of a Government which will preside over the affairs of St Lucia during this electoral term.

It was a hard but honourable charge which she laid upon me, and I have now come to report and to present to you the result of my efforts, and to explain briefly to the people of St Lucia, the reason for my choice.

We are now entering very challenging times in which the tide of globalization is washing our shores. If we are not only to survive but to prosper, we must adjust our thinking and our actions to these times.

In my choice of the persons to help us to chart our course through the troubled times, I have sought to choose “Horses for Courses”.

Home Affairs And Internal Security – Dr. Keith Mondesir

All surveys of public opinion in St Lucia have shown that crime and public safety, and employment and education, to be of prime concerns.

To deal with the problems of crime, I have invited Dr. Keith Mondesir, the elected member for Anse-la-Ray/Carnaries, to accept this portfolio. Dr. Mondesir has wide experience both here in St Lucia, in Canada and other Caribbean Islands, in medicine, in management and community relations. This experience will serve him in good stead as we face the problem that is of major public concern. I invite the support of the public to ensure success in this task – a problem which affects us all and which is the first responsibility of any Government.

Housing And Urban Redevelopment – Mr. Richard Frederick

Closely linked with crime and criminal activity is the problem of poor housing and the ‘ghettorisation’ of our city, our towns and villages, where the blight of urban decay spread throughout our land.

As our economy shifts from rural based agriculture to an urban based one of tourism and services, as we see the relentless drift of our young population into our city and urban areas, all our efforts at diversifying our economy will be sorely affected unless we pay serious and urgent attention to the blight of urban decay and poor housing.

The girdle of slums which surrounds our city is a veritable incubator for crime that threatens our daily lives.

This problem must be tackled with determination and with imagination.

For this purpose, I have created a new Ministry of Housing and Urban Renewal, coupled with Local Government and offered the challenge to the Honourable Richard Frederick, the member for Central Castries.

Mr. Frederick is not only the member for the city of Castries and the surrounding urban areas, where the problem is most urgent, but the affection in which he is held, and the respect which he commands in the affected areas are well known. His experience as a former Police Officer, his profession of Law and his association with the Tourism Industry will be experiences, and will serve him in good stead as he embarks on this very challenging adventure.

REMARKS BY HONOURABLE SIR JOHN G M COMPTON CONTINUED

Education And Culture – Mr. Arsene James

The principal challenge of the Government must be the removal of the scourge of poverty from the bulk of our population. A recent survey by the Caribbean Bank revealed the frightening problem created by the shift of our economy. It showed that while there is growth in the economy – that is growth in the money supply – the gap between rich and poor has widened and the percentage of persons and households which fell below the poverty line has increased in the past ten years. As we seek to address this problem we are guided by the words of Sir Arthur Lewis that “the fundamental cure for poverty is not money, but knowledge”.

With this in mind we shall be embarking on fundamental reform of our education system to offer to investors and developers an educated workforce and converting our economy into a “knowledge based” society.

We are now given an opportunity to revisit the universal secondary education and transform it from being one of placement into a secondary school, into an education system based on the ability and aptitude of each child.

To carry out this task, I have invited the Honourable Arsene James, the member for Micoud South, whose career in education spans many years, culminating with the distinction of being the President of the School Principals Association. With him, and specifically charged with the task of Education Reform and Development will be Mr. Gaspard Charlemagne whose qualification is not only education, but music and culture. In their posts they must address both education and culture.

Youth Sports And Community Development – Mr. Lennard Montoute

Closely associated with education is the portfolio of youth, sports and community development, now glamourised with Social Transformation.

The interest and experience of Mr. Lennard “Spider” Montoute in the area is well known and I am therefore spared repetition, but his vista of sports extend beyond the mundane of organising youth clubs and tournaments, important though these may be. It is one of general education in sports, to give our young people an opportunity of earning a living in this form of activity, even beyond the boundaries of St Lucia, also to attract sports people from outside St Lucia to utilize the facilities in which so much has been invested. In other words, to link to sports, not only the education of our youth into clubs where they shoot goals – their personal goals and ambitions – and not shoot each other, but to connect this Ministry to health, wellness and tourism.

The first major challenge of this Ministry will be the organisation of the Cricket World Cup, into which so much has been invested by both the private and the public sector, to ensure that this investment is

not a “twelve week wonder”, but that the benefits of this would render exposure and continue well beyond this event and well into the future. This calls for marketing of our country and its facilities, to provide the linkage between sports and tourism which can be of immense benefit to our people in general and to our young sports men and women in particular.

On the social side of this Ministry – the area of Social Transformation, I have invited Miss Tessa Mangal to serve. This is to ensure that the needs of the women, and underprivileged are not neglected and be a breeding ground for problems in our society as we make our drive for modernization and reform.

Health And Labour – Mr. Stephenson King

It is an accepted truth that “the health of a nation is the wealth of a nation” and so it is – St Lucia the challenges relating to this portfolio are many.

The hundreds of millions being invested in this area will be wasted without proper management and training of personnel. A new hospital does not necessarily guarantee a proper health service. We are fortunate to have available to us through the wise selection of the people of the Castries North Constituency, the proven experience and ability of Mr. Stephenson King whose previous service in the Ministry of Health, has earned him the praise not only of the medical fraternity, but of the people of St Lucia in general.

While there is much talk of the Universal Health Care, the complexity of this effort demands not only a Minister of Mr. King’s experience but a team of men and women dedicated to deliver to the people of St Lucia the quality and range of health services that our people deserve. I am convinced that Mr. Stephenson King is up to this task.

His personality and his experience also equip him for the conciliation, mediation and compromise necessary for the challenges which the Ministry of Labour will inevitably bring. He will be provided with a loyal professional and dedicated team which the challenge demands.

Agriculture And Marketing – Mr. Ezekiel Joseph

For many generations, Agriculture was the leading sector of our economy. But as agriculture faces the challenges of a globalised world, it has become the Cinderella of our economy and the “golden carriage” has once again turned into a “pumpkin”. Perhaps Cinderella will once again emerge as she may have met her Prince Charming in the person of Mr. Ezekiel Joseph, the member for Babonneau. He brings to this task of reforming and transforming this Ministry – the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Fisheries and Forestry, not only academic qualification, but an enormous wealth of practi-

cal experience in this field.

The challenges of this Ministry is not only in production, but in marketing our own produces and providing grading and packaging, to meet the demands and standards both for the supermarkets, the hotels and the export market. This calls for the experience and organisational skills which Mr. Marcus Nicholas, the member for Dennery North has displayed in his own line of business.

Trade, Industry And Commerce – Mr. Guy Mayers

Electoral fortunes did not smile on Mr. Guy Mayers but the demands of this country in the field of International Trade, Commerce and Industry, the need of our people to meet the challenges of this rapidly changing world, demands that the knowledge, experience and dedication of Mr. Mayers should be harmonised for our development to provide the employment which we will need to absorb the growing number of educated youth who will enter the workforce each year.

The changes brought about by the Free Trade of the Americas have caused us many casualties in the manufacturing sector. Few communities have suffered more than the Dennery community with the loss of Belle Fashion. It is for this reason that I have invited Mr. Edmund Estephane the elected member for Dennery South to serve with Mr. Guy Mayers, to attract industry to the communities to provide employment and prevent the urban drift which is the root cause of overcrowding and crime in our city and major towns.

Communications, Works, Transport And Public Utilities – Mr. Guy Joseph

A modern economy depends upon an efficient supply of transport and public utilities. It is for this reason that I have invited Mr. Guy Joseph the member for Castries South to serve in this Ministry. He has already had experience in the field before he came into elective politics and his management skills have been amply demonstrated in the modernisation of the internal transport.

Demands will be made upon these skills by every sector of the economy. Be it health (for water), agriculture for internal transportation, Tourism for air and sea ports. I am confident that he will meet the challenges as he has met others in the past.

Foreign Affairs, International Investment, Information And Broadcasting – Mr. Rufus Bousquet

No man is an island – no man stands alone. So to with countries, especially small countries. We must therefore keep those friends we have and grapple them to our hearts with hoops of steel. This is the task given to Mr. Rufus Bousquet, the member for Choiseul/Saltibus. His task is not only to keep those friends we have but to expand the circle bearing in mind always that the interest of St Lucia

and St Lucians is paramount.

The subject of International Financial Services is not new to him because it is Rufus who first introduced this when he served as Minister responsible for the NDC in 1995.

He will keep the public informed of the activities of the Government as Minister for Information and Broadcasting.

Minister For Tourism And Civil Aviation – Mr. Allen Chastanet

In our drive to diversify and to modernize our economy we have invested heavily in tourism – both by the private and public sector. This area will, in the foreseeable future, be the lead sector, providing not only the jobs but the essential linkages to all other sectors of social and economic life. It is important therefore, that we have at our disposal persons who have the vision, the knowledge and the experience to guide this important area of our economy.

I have therefore invited Mr. Allen Chastanet to serve. Mr. Chastanet has the vision to see the road ahead and to prepare us for the challenges we will inevitably meet in this fiercely competitive world. St Lucia may be beautiful but we must realize that we are not the “only pebble on the beach” and to meet the competition we must mobilize our best brains and our resources. Mr. Chastanet will be backed by a team of men and women who have excellent track records in this field.

His own interest in this field is no conflict, but an incentive from which the entire industry will benefit.

Economic Planning, Development And The Public Services – Mr. Ausbert D’auvergne

Without vision the people perish, so too without proper planning. It is because of this and my own knowledge and experience with him that I have invited Mr. Ausbert d’Auvergne to serve in the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. Even his fiercest critics do not deny his ability which has been proven over the years in the Ministry in which he has been invited to serve.

As this stage of its development St Lucia needs the talent, the experience and the drive of Mr. d’Auvergne. St Lucia also needs a reformed, re-organised and a dedicated public service, if this Government is to deliver on its promises made in the electorate and lead St Lucia into that bright and secure future to which it has committed itself.

Now that the tumult and the shouting has died, now that the war drums of political rhetoric beat no longer, now that the battle flags have been furled, let us now proceed in the words of our Anthem – “where strife and discord will no longer dim our children’s toil and rest”. Let us work to deliver what we promised “a Bright and secure Future”.

I have done this part of my duty. Now proceed to do yours. Thanks.

Press Statement by Caricom Observer Mission to Saint Lucia

(CARICOM Secretariat, Turkeyen, Greater Georgetown, Guyana, 13th December, 2006) The elections in Saint Lucia are over and the CARICOM Observer Mission congratulates the people of Saint Lucia in their conduct on Election Day. The people have spoken and soon the results of the poll will be made official.

On Election Day, the CARICOM

Observer Team spread throughout 17 constituencies of Saint Lucia. The delegation visited hundreds of polling stations and observed the process from the opening of the poll to the counting of ballots. CARICOM is pleased with the way in which the process of voting was conducted and expresses its satisfaction with the logistical arrangements for the conducting of the poll. We are satisfied that on Election Day the poll was conducted in a free and fair manner.

CARICOM congratulates the Electoral Commission for its preparation and execution of the elections and especially would like to recognise the hard work of the Chief Elections Officer and his staff. In addition, the CARICOM Observer Group would like to acknowledge the work of other stakeholders in the process.

Throughout this campaign, the people of Saint Lucia conducted themselves in a dignified manner. The CARICOM

Observer group acknowledges, with satisfaction, the efforts of everyone involved in this electoral campaign, from political parties to the media.

The CARICOM Observer Group would like to congratulate the people on the peaceful conduct of the process; we thank the Saint Lucian People for their hospitality and wish you all a Happy Independence and Happy Holidays.

Statement by H.E. Edwin W. Carrington, Secretary-General, Caribbean Community, at the end-of-year Press Briefing, 8th December 2006, Georgetown, Guyana

Members of the Media in Georgetown and across the Region, Members of Executive Management and Staff of the CARICOM Secretariat, People of the Region. It seems as though it was just yesterday that I was in a similar position doing this very activity that is meeting with the press at the end of the calendar year. It is clear not only does "time and tide wait for no man" so also do developments in the Region and across the globe for that matter.

As I said earlier in this year in terms of Community activity, it has been a virtual annus mirabilis for the Community. The Region has, indeed, moved closer to being the integrated body that we all hope it will become.

Let me refer to some significant developments

SUMMITS

CARICOM Heads of Government, as is customary, met twice for the year - at the Inter-session in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago in February, under the chairmanship of Prime Minister the Hon. Patrick Manning, and in July for their regular annual Summit in St Kitts and Nevis, under the Chairmanship of The Honourable Dr Denzil Douglas.

These meetings were supplemented by two meetings of the Bureau, one in St Kitts and Nevis in October and one on Barbados in November.

We, at the Secretariat, were delighted to have Chairman Manning visit us during his term and share his thoughts on the way forward for the Community. We were also deeply appreciative to the Honourable Roosevelt Skerrit, the Prime Minister of Dominica, for having done the same.

Heads of Government also participated in a number of other major international meetings, including the CARICOM-Spain Summit in Madrid, and the European Union/Latin America and the Caribbean Summit in Vienna, Austria, both in May.

CSME

The year started on a very positive note with the launching of the Single Market on January 1 by Barbados, Belize, Guyana,

Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, with an impressive formal ceremony at Mona, Jamaica on 30 January.

Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines followed suit at the Twenty-Seventh Regular Session of the Conference of Heads on 3 July. The net expected result is that as Prime Minister Manning, then Chairman, said in January, "our economies will become more resilient, with greater capacity for self-generation and more attractive for inflow of new capital".

DEVELOPMENT FUND

As the Community moved towards establishing the framework for the Single Economy by 2008, the Heads of Government agreed in February to capitalise the CARICOM Development Fund at US \$250 million. The Fund is a major element of the CSME. The CSME was also boosted by the bringing together of representatives of Member States, captains of industry, lead representatives of labour, members of academia and civil society in a three day symposium in pursuit of the Single Economy, Caribbean Connect, in Barbados.

Please let me remind that we can only achieve a Single Market and Economy through the joint efforts of Governments and their social partners. It is not easy to achieve the status of CSME, hence the reason that CARICOM so far is the only grouping of developing countries to have committed to this depth of integration. But we are not yet there - we have a significant way to go yet. Moreover, commitment is one thing, implementation, the true test, is another.

COMMUNITY PRODUCTION AND TRADE

While the Community has been engrossed in the building of the Single Market and Economy, it has likewise been engaged in the bread and butter, or should we say rice and beans, issues of regional production and trade. It has even been concerned with the issue of cement. More anon, including developments relating to our key agricultural production and exports especially sugar, banana and rice.

OECS ECONOMIC UNION

In the same economic vein, the member countries of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States signed a Declaration of Intent to deepen their integration by forming an economic union. This was during their celebrations in June marking the 25th Anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Basseterre which created the OECS. This will bring greater bargaining power to them and, in addition, can have positive spin-off effects for the strengthening of the wider Caribbean Community.

HAITI

One of the major highlights of the past year was the re-admittance of Haiti into the Community's Councils. Let me reiterate that CARICOM stands ready to support Haiti as it returns to democracy, and to lend assistance in determined areas. This message was delivered by Chairman of the Community, the Prime Minister of St Kitts and Nevis, the Honourable Dr Denzil Douglas, to the Government and people of Haiti during a visit last October at the head of a Prime Ministerial Mission which included the Prime Ministers of Saint Lucia and Dominica, Dr the Honourable Kenny Anthony and the Honourable Roosevelt Skerrit, respectively, as well as yours truly.

We welcomed the release of Mr. Yvon Neptune, Prime Minister in the Aristide government, following an order by the Appeals Court of Haiti. CARICOM had repeatedly condemned "the abuse of due process and of the rule of law" associated with the detention of Mr. Neptune, without trial. You will hear more on Haiti in a short while from the Deputy Secretary-General.

FURTHER AFIELD

CARICOM's relations with the Rio Group, quite an important one in the face of globalisation, were enhanced with the assumption of the Chairmanship of the Rio Group by Guyana on behalf of the Community in January.

Moving further out, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of CARICOM met with the US Secretary of State and agreed to the convening of a Conference on the Caribbean in 2007, with a view to placing Ca-



H.E. Edwin W. Carrington

ibbean affairs more firmly on the agenda of the US government and other influential elements in that society. Most notably, three months after that meeting, President Bush declared June as Caribbean American Heritage Month which highlights the contributions of Caribbean Americans to that nation.

Bilaterals

Apart from the US, the Community strengthened bilateral relations, through various meetings with Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Spain and the United Kingdom.

A major on-going bilateral negotiations occupied a significant part of the year between Europe and the CARIFORUM countries - CARICOM plus Dominican Republic. Those negotiations, the most recent of which was held in Brussels two weeks ago, will continue into the New Year with a scheduled completion at the end of 2007.

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Caricom Countries on Track To Achieve CWC 2007 Security Goals

The nine Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries that will host matches for Cricket World Cup (CWC) 2007 are on track to achieve security goals in time for the March 2007 start of the world's third largest sporting event.

"Most countries are into the stage where they're starting to look at how they are going to do simulations and table top exercises and actually work those plans that they have come up with in the past year or so, and how they are actually going to work out in real time. So that's the general state of the Region... at the moment," said Colonel Antony Anderson, Regional Operations Commander, the CARICOM Operational Planning and Coordinating Staff (COPACS) in Georgetown on 15 December.

Colonel Anderson and his team were in Guyana for a series of meetings with a national team of security planners, command staff and logistic elements headed by Guyana's Minister of Home Affairs, the Honourable Clement Rohee. Colonel Anderson was among officials who briefed the media on Friday 15. The others were Home Affairs Minister, Commissioner of Police Mr. Henry Greene, and Assistant Commissioner of Police, Mr. Paul Slowe, who is spearheading security arrangements for Guyana's leg of the tournament.

Established by the CARICOM Heads of Government at their meeting in July 2006 in St. Kitts and Nevis, COPACS' function is to secure the Region for CWC 2007. In this regard Colonel Anderson and his team by the end of January 2007, will complete visit to all the hosting matches for the tournament.

Among COPACS' mandates are to provide and coordinate the Region's assets to



Security forces at a simulation exercise at the Beausejour Cricket Ground, St. Lucia

assist deficient countries which are hosting the matches, and to ensure common standards across the Region. With the Single Domestic Space created for CWC 2007, one country is dependent on the other to secure its borders.

"Everyone in the process would like to know that what is happening in another country will sufficiently protect them from any of the things that they would normally protect themselves from," said Colonel Anderson.

He added that one of the first things his team looks for in its visits to the host countries is whether there is an understanding of the magnitude and scale of the event. In addition to creating an environment that will encourage visitors to enjoy what the Caribbean has to offer, those countries must also put measures in place to deal with "hostile

persons with criminal intent".

"It is of course the balance of these two things that will make for a successful regional and national approach to this tournament," Colonel Anderson said.

Though work varies from state to state, countries are well advanced in their security preparations. Mr. Slowe pointed out that every aspect of the tournament had a security component and indicated that Guyana was at the point where it was conducting training exercises for security personnel of both the private and public sectors, seeking specialist assistance and preparing for two cricket matches to test its preparedness. Commissioner Greene said discussions with Colonel Anderson included forms of assistance with regard to a bomb disposal unit, as well as help to deal with hazardous material.

With regard to garnering international assistance to achieve security goals, Colonel Anderson said that letters have been exchanged between CARICOM and Brazil and there have been meetings with Regional Diplomats and at the Resource Mobilisation Committee level. There is a CARICOM Resource Mobilisation Committee on Cricket headed by Minister of National Security in Jamaica, Dr. Peter Phillips. That Committee is coordinating with a UK-based team which has experience from the Athens Olympics. Together, Colonel Anderson said, they will consider approaching the international community for assets and/or assistance for foreign engagements in the Region.

"Once that sort of asset is donated or available to us, then it's our job to see how we coordinate that and fit that in with the overall security architecture that we are trying to develop," Colonel Anderson said.

Statement by H.E. Edwin W. Carrington Continued

The relationship between CARICOM and the United Nations Population Fund was further strengthened by the launch of the South-South Initiative which is intended to institutionalise joint planning and implementation of activities in critical areas of human development in the Community. I have also just returned from delivering the feature address at the Population Fund's Caribbean Media Awards held in Jamaica where I also held discussions with the representative for Latin America and the Caribbean, Ms Marisela Padron, with a view to strengthening the relationship between our two organisations.

During my recent travels from which I returned only last night, I had the honour of addressing the opening dinner of the 30th Annual Miami Conference on the Caribbean, and I also paid a visit to Guadeloupe in furtherance of our relations with the wider Caribbean.

DIPLOMATIC ENHANCEMENT

The Community saw an enhanced diplomatic status with new Ambassa-

dors being accredited to the Community by Germany, Cuba, Barbados, Brazil, the United States and Canada. Community Relations.

The Community received for the first time ever a national award, and it was the highest that Dominica could bestow, the Dominican Award of Honour. It was my privilege to receive it on behalf of the Community in the presence of the Chairman Dr Douglas.

As the year comes to a close, I will be paying an official visit to the Cayman Islands as the Community continues to seek greater involvement by its Associate Members.

Next year seems set to rank as a very auspicious one with the major event being the staging of the ICC Cricket World Cup. The preparatory process for that tournament is in high gear. In that regard, it is critical that this very weekend at least three Member States sign the final text of the CARICOM Special Visa Agreement, bearing in mind that December 15, that is next Friday, is the opening for applications for the visas.

As far as the Cricket World Cup is concerned all of us must play our best strokes as we welcome the world to our shores and ensure that a good time is had by all beyond the boundary! The event has already had a positive effect on the integration movement in a number of ways, in particular in the field of security. Its legacy should therefore be one that would leave the integration arrangements stronger. Of course we will also win the trophy! I hope.

Next year, the Region will also be part of the commemoration of the 200th Anniversary of the Abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade, as well as joining Haiti in celebrating the 200th anniversary of its Parliament. Finally, 2007 will also see the staging of the first ever Conference on the Caribbean in Washington D.C. Historic times indeed!

I cannot close without paying tribute to one of the stalwarts of regional integration who departed the formal political stage during 2006. His contribution has been without equal. I speak of none other than the Most Honourable P.J. Pat-



THIS WEEK ON NTN

Sat. Dec. 23rd to Fri. Dec. 29th 2006
NTN – PROVIDING

INFORMATION YOU NEED

Careless use of pesticides can pose several problems to our health. Need more information, then join us on:

Sat. Dec. 23rd, 9:30 a.m.

The GIS discusses latest developments in the banana industry - Sun. Dec. 24th, 11:00 a.m.

Relive Star Quest Christmas Spectacular – Mon. Dec. 25th, 8:00 p.m.

Helen Folk Quadrille Festival – Part 1 - Tues. Dec. 26th, 7:30 p.m.

Festival of Carols - Wed. Dec. 27th, 8:00 p.m.

Ministry of Planning Officials discuss global warming and several other issues pertaining to environmental sustainability - Thurs. Dec. 28th, 8:00 p.m.

Violinists throughout the country display their talents at a unique gathering – Fri. Dec. 29th, 8:00 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.

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