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Editor's Corner

Dear Valued Members

Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) "**Partnering for a more Equitable and Sustainable Future**" is now 42 days away! CHOGM will be held in Trinidad and Tobago from 24-26 November 2009 and is convened every two years to review global, political and economic development. In this issue we highlight the **Republic of Sierre Leone** who will be attending CHOGM.

Members are reminded that registration for **Commonwealth Business Forum (CBF) being held from 23rd to 26th November 2009** is still open. Also, the Commonwealth Business Council (CBC) is seeking active project proposals to encourage matchmaking ventures for those attending the CBF. Further information is included in this Bulletin and the relevant forms are attached.

We also bring you an update on the international trade arena. Our 'Mark Your Calendar' section provides information on trade fairs among a wide range of events and pay special attention to our 'Trade Requests and Business Opportunities' section as there may be something of interest to you!!

We hope that you find the information useful. Happy Reading!

10 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SIERRA LEONE!

1. Where is Sierra Leone?

The Republic of Sierra Leone is washed by the Atlantic Ocean and shares its border with Guinea (north) and Liberia (south-east) in the African Continent.



2. Demographic Information:

- Population: 5.8 million
- Population growth: 1.9%
- Literacy: 65.2%
- Languages: English (official language), and 8 other main languages
- Religion: Muslims 60%, Christians 10%, with the remainder practicing traditional religions.

Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

3. Currency Exchange Rate:

- 3,401.00 Sierra Leone Leones (SLL): 1 USD(\$)
- 5,611.56 SLL: 1 UK Pound Sterling (£)
- 4,817.66 SLL: 1.00 Euro (€)

Source: Xe.com Conversion

4. Political Information

Sierra Leone gained Independence in 1961 and became a Republic in 1971, with an executive president. From 1967-2002 Sierra Leone went through a period of political instability and civil strife as there were numerous coups and the civil war. In May 2002, legislative and presidential elections were held with

Commonwealth observers present, which were won by the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP). In 2007, the All People's Party won the election and Mr. Ernest Bai Koroma was sworn in as President. Commonwealth observers reported that the election was carried out in a democratic and credible manner in accordance with internationally accepted standards.

5. Economic Indicators

	2007	2008	2009	2010
Real GDP growth (%)	6.4	5.5	4.5	5.3
Consumer Prices (%)	11.7	14.8	10.6	8.9
Current Account Balance (%)	-3.8	-8.4	-4.8	-4.6

Source: World Economic Outlook

6. Ease of doing business rankings

	2008	2009
Ease of Doing Business Index	163	156

Source: Ease of Doing Business Report 2009

7. Top Import Commodities 2007

	% of Total Imports
Fuels and Mining Products	40.3
Agricultural Products	29.9
Manufactures	29.1

Source: World Trade Organisation

8. Countries of Origin of Imports 2007

	% of Total Imports
Cote d'Ivoire	36.7
European Union (27 states)	18.5
Canada	6.5

Source: World Trade Organisation

9. Top Export Commodities 2007

	% of Total Exports
Agricultural Products	78.1
Manufactures	6.3
Fuels and Mining Products	0.1

Source: World Trade Organisation

10. Countries of Destination of exports 2007

	% of Total Exports
United States	1.0
Saudi Arabia	0.4
European Union (27 states)	0.2

Source: World Trade Organisation

COMMONWEALTH BUSINESS FORUM 2009 – HOW TO REGISTER!

The **Commonwealth Business Forum (CBF)** is one of the pre-events associated with the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). The CBF is a unique gathering of business leaders and will focus on building the new economic and financial architecture in the global economy. The Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce through the local Private Sector Advisory Group for the Commonwealth Business Council (CBC) is facilitating this international business event scheduled to take place from **Monday 23rd November to Thursday 26th November 2009** onboard the cruise liner, *Serenade of the Seas*.

To book online visit <http://cbf09.eventbrite.com> and use the code **CBF09TTCIC** when registering for this prestigious event. The e-flyer below contains further information.

The CBF presents an excellent opportunity to meet potential business partners. The Commonwealth Business Council (CBC) invites **investment project proposals** to encourage matchmaking ventures for participants of the CBF. The relevant form is included as a separate attachment.

Commonwealth Business Forum 2009
*Partnering for a More Equitable and Sustainable Future
The Commonwealth and the Americas*

23rd-26th November 2009
Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago

Sponsors:



Official Carriers - save up to 20% on flights



Partners:



FORUM DETAILS
Dates: Monday 23rd to Thursday 26th November 2009
Boarding/Registration time: 14:00 on 23rd November 2009
Site Visit: Friday 27th November 2009
Check-out time: 16:00 on 26th November 2009
Location: Port-of-Spain, Trinidad-and-Tobago
Venue: *Serenade of the Seas* cruise liner docked in Port-of-Spain Harbor
Arrival: Piarco International Airport in Port-of-Spain (27 km or 17 miles from Port-of-Spain centre)
Shuttle transfers: Available on a continuous basis from 23rd November between Piarco International Airport and the *Serenade of the Seas*.

INTRODUCTION TO CBF Trinidad-&-Tobago 2009
The Commonwealth Business Forum (CBF), which will take place in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago on 23-26 November 2009. It is part of the official programme of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting being hosted by Trinidad and Tobago in November and will be the most influential international business event ever held in the Caribbean.

The Forum is organised by the Commonwealth Business Council (CBC) in collaboration with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, it will provide a valuable opportunity for dialogue between business and government leaders from the Commonwealth and beyond, focusing on the themes "Partnering for a More Equitable and Sustainable Future-the Commonwealth and the Americas".

Correct as 3rd September 2009

Commonwealth Business Council
18 Pall Mall London SW1Y 5LU Registration No: 387 1530
Tel: +44 (0)20 7024 8200 Fax: +(44)20 7024 8201
E-mail: info@cbcglobal.org Web: www.cbcglobal.org

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CANADA/CARICOM TRADE AGREEMENT UPDATE!

As the 2011 expiry date of The World Trade Organization (WTO) waiver under CARIBCAN approaches, Trinidad and Tobago is preparing to begin negotiations on the Canada/CARICOM Free Trade Agreement. The first round of meetings of the CARICOM Technical Working Groups will take place in Barbados at the Grand Barbados Hotel from 19th to 23rd October in Services, Investment and Market Access. The first round of negotiations between Canada and CARICOM are due to commence on 16th November 2009 in Barbados with a second round planned for early 2010.

In September 2009, The Honourable Stockwell Day, Minister of International Trade, Canada met with a select group of CARICOM Ministers led by Minister of Trade and Industry, Mariano Browne in Trinidad and Tobago. They met to discuss a number of issues including the extent of Ministerial Engagement in Negotiations and the inclusion of a Development dimension in the Trade Agreement.

Whilst in the country, a special meeting was convened with Business Sector Organizations and Minister Stockwell Day to discuss expanding trade between Canada and Trinidad and Tobago and the possible outcomes the private sector expects from such a trade agreement with Canada. The President of the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Angella Persad and Manager – Business & Sector Services, Camille Sears-Carter Wells raised issues pertaining to how the Rules of Origin do act as a technical barrier to trade since the requirements from province to province differ; in addition to this issue raised by members were the labeling requirements in French and English speaking Canada and clarity on Commercial Presence i.e. setting up business in Canada with respect to the taxes and licence requirements.

In 2008, merchandise imports from CARICOM totalled \$1.6 billion and included natural resource products such as inorganic chemicals, precious stones and metals, organic chemicals, iron and steel, beverages, mineral fuels and oils, fish and seafood, and fertilizers.

Canadian merchandise exports to CARICOM totalled \$906.4 million and included mineral fuels and oils (not crude), mineral ores, cereals, machinery, paper and paperboard, fish and seafood, and electrical and electronic equipment.

In 2008, two-way merchandise trade between Canada and CARICOM countries amounted to \$2.5 billion (a 15.8-percent increase from 2007).

CAIRBCAN is limited to trade in goods and does not cover trade in services, which currently accounts for an increasing proportion of trade between Canada and CARICOM.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

LOCAL

The Annual National Career and Recruitment Fair 2009

Date: 20th and 21st October 2009

Venue: Centre of Excellence, Macoya, Trinidad

Date: 30th October 2009

Venue: Gulf City, Lowlands, Tobago

Contact 1: National Training Agency

Email: consumerservices@ntatt.org

Tel: (868) 672-7107/8

Contact 2: Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce

Email: kcox@chamber.org.tt

Tel: (868) 637-6966 ext 251

Contact 3: On the Job Training

Email: ojt@gov.tt

Tel: (868) 628-6394

HIV in the Workplace Seminar

Date: 23rd October, 2009

Venue: The Paria Ballroom, Paria Suites Hotel, La Romaine

Contact: Mr. Terrence Beepath

Tel: 697-1386 or 620-4307

Email: Beepath@mail.tt

The International Facility Management Association (IFMA) "The Operations and Maintenance Competency Course"

Date: 26th – 27th October 2009

Contact: Leah de Souza or Ria Joseph

Tel: (868) 638-5858

Fax: (868) 638-8677

Email: Leah.de.Souza@trainmar-caribbean.org

Website: www.trainmar-caribbean.org

The International Facility Management Association (IFMA) "The Planning and Project Management Competency Course"

Date: 28th – 29th October 2009

Contact: Leah de Souza or Ria Joseph

Tel: (868) 638-5858

Fax: (868) 638-8677

Email: Leah.de.Souza@trainmar-caribbean.org or

ria.joseph@trainmar-caribbean.org

Website: www.trainmar-caribbean.org

Breast Cancer Awareness Month Breakfast

Date: 30th October 2009

Time: 7:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Venue: Hyatt Regency

National Services Week 2009

Schedule of Events:

Date: 1st November 2009

Opening Dinner

Venue: Hilton Trinidad

Date: 2nd November 2009

Session of Services for Students (a.m.)

Education Services (p.m.)

Date: 3rd November 2009

The Financial Services Sector (a.m.)

Placing a Value on Intellectual Capital (p.m.)

Date: 4th November 2009

Illuminat ICT Workshop (a.m.)

Midwifery Conference (p.m.)

Date: 5th November 2009

Caribbean Export Mutual Recognition Agreements Workshop (a.m.)

Health Services (p.m.)

Date: 6th November 2009

Sport and Development (a.m.)

Culture Matters (p.m.)

** All events will be held at the Cascadia Hotel except the Opening Dinner*

Contact: Ms. Florence Louis- Edouard

Tel: (868) 622-9229

Email: flouis@ttcsi.org

Commonwealth Planners Conference "Partnerships among the State, Civil Society and the Private Sector in Planning and Development"

Date: 19th – 21st November, 2009

Venue: Hyatt Regency

Contact: Ms. Vanessa Romeo or Ms. Adanna Edwards

Tel: 627-9700 ext. 2139 or ext. 2145

Email: vanessa.romeo@phe.gov.tt or adanna.edwards@phe.gov.tt

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

The Commonwealth Business Forum, (pre-event to the CHOGM)

Date: 23rd -26th November, 2009

Venue: Serenade of the Seas (Cruise Liner), Port of Spain

To register,

Tel: + 44 (0) 207 024 8200

E-mail: delegates@cbcglobal.org

Website: <http://cbf2009.eventbrite.com>

REGIONAL

“Eric Williams ‘School Bags’ Essay Competition”

Date: September 2009 – January 2010

Contact: Erica Williams Connell

Tel: 305-905-9999

Email: ewmc@ewmc-tt.org

Website: www.ericwilliamsmemorialcollection.org

10th Forum of the Great Caribbean Enterprises

Date: 21st to 24th October 2009

Venue: Karibe Hotel and Convention Center, Haiti

Tel: (613) 238-1628 ext 23

Email: ambassade-haiti@bellnet.ca

Website: www.10acsbusinessforum-haiti.com

International Havana Fair

Date: 2nd – 7th November

Venue: EXPOCUBA Fairgrounds, Havana, Cuba

Telephone: + (537)-2710758, 2716614

Fax: + (537)-2719065

E-mail: pabexpo1@palco.cu

Website: www.feriahavana.com

XLI (41st) Annual Monetary Studies Conference (2009)

Date: 10th - 13th November, 2009

Venue: Georgetown, Guyana

Email: deputygovernor@bankofguyana.org.gy

Or ccms@sra.uwi.edu

Or Kathleen.charles@sta.uwi.edu

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

INTERNATIONAL

China Import and Export Fair (Canton Fair)

Date: 15th-19th October 2009

Venue: China Import and Export Fair Complex,
No. 380, Yuejiang Zhong Rd, Guangzhou, China

Telephone: + 020-26088888

Website: www.cantonfair.org.cn

Delhi International Leather Fair

Date: 23rd- 25th October, 2009

Venue: Pragati Maidan, New Delhi, India

Website: www.delhileatherfair.com

X Air Cargo Americas International Congress and Exhibition 2009

Date: 4th-6th November 2009

Venue: Miami Beach Convention Center, Miami Beach, Florida

Website: www.worldtrade.org

12th Americas Food and Beverage Show and Conference

Date: 9th-10th November 2009

Venue: Doubletree Miami Mart Hotel & Convention Center, Miami, Florida

Website: www.worldtrade.org

2009 Miami Conference on the Caribbean and Central America

Date: 30th November – 2nd December 2009

Venue: InterContinental Hotel, Miami, Florida

Website: www.c-cao.org

Third Business and the 2010 Biodiversity Challenge Conference

Date: 30th November – 3rd December 2009

Venue: Jakarta, Indonesia

Email: business@cbd.int

4th Edition of Medifest

Date: 11-13 December 2009

Venue: Maidan, New Dehli, India

Email: contact@vantagetradeairs.com

Tel: +91-11-30580444

Fax: +91-11-30581000

10th Auto Expo 2010

Date: 5th – 11th January 2010

Venue: Pragati Maidan, New Delhi

Website: www.autoexpo.in

5th Plastic, Packaging, Paper & Print Asia 2010 International Exhibition

Date: 6th – 8th February 2010

Venue: Karachi Expo Centre, Pakistan

Website: www.plastpackasia.com

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES AND TRADE REQUESTS!

The National Infrastructure Development Company Limited (NIDCO) is a special purpose state enterprise established by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) for the execution and implementation of projects which fall within the purview of the Ministry of Works and Transport. GORTT intends to carry out major network enhancements to the highways network by constructing the National Network of Highways Project (NNHP).

The NNHP implementation plan consists of three (3) phases of work to be executed prior to 2025. Phase 1 of the NNHP consists of seven (7) packages of approximately 250 km of highway development with the procurement process commencing in November 2009. NIDCO is implementing Phase 1 of the NNHP on behalf of GORTT and is seeking Expressions of Interest from major design and construction firms, joint ventures and/or consortia interested in providing Design/Build contracting services for the implementation of Phase 1 of the NNHP or any part thereof.

An information meeting will be held for all interested parties at the Hilton Trinidad and Conference Centre on October 21, 2009 at 9a.m. Proposers planning on attending the information meeting are asked to confirm their attendance with the names of attendees as soon as possible by e-mail to trinidadhighways@nidco.co.tt. Proposers will be able to collect the EOI documentation at this meeting or by request to the above email. EOIs are to be submitted no later than 12:00 noon (EST), November 11, 2009 at the offices of NIDCO at First Floor 122 St. Vincent Street, Port of Spain, Trinidad [FAO: The Secretary to the Tenders Committee].

The Art Society of Trinidad and Tobago has collaborated quite successfully with the Label House Group in the production and installation of large scale re-productions of paintings at the Oval and at the Hyatt Waterfront. They have just launched an effort to procure new work for re-production to coincide with the opening of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in November 2009. Artists have been asked to paint to the theme “*Sustainability and the Elimination of Poverty*”. It is proposed that at least one hundred (100) new works would be installed around the perimeter walls of the Oval and the walls of the British High Commission facing the Oval.

A launch would need to be planned, as well as simultaneous exhibition of the original works that are juried and selected as well as the limited productions of prints and a comprehensive brochure featuring the artists and their works.

The various activities that are necessary to make this initiative a success require funding. The Arts Society would greatly appreciate any assistance the business community is willing to provide. If you are interested in being a sponsor of this initiative you may contact :

Courtenay B. Williams, President of The Art Society of Trinidad and Tobago at:

Tel: (868) 623-5461 Ext 228

Email: admin@artsocietytt.org

Website: <http://artsocietytt.org>

Address: Corner Jamaica Blvd. and St. Vincent Ave., Federation Park, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

The **Galillee College ‘SMEs Management and Development Programmes’** are designed to help start-ups and small or medium businesses improve their chances of success. The lectures and study tours are devised to provide tools for decision makers at the national level as well as officials in banks who must evaluate loans for SMEs. Commencement of registration for the Galillee College 2010 programmes has officially opened. For additional information about the curriculum, please contact:

Mrs. Miriam Abzak, Programme Director.

Email: mabzak@galilcol.ac.il Website: www.galilcol.ac.il Tel: (+972-4) 6428888