



NEWSLETTER

The Antigua and Barbuda High Commission

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(l to r) Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer, Amb. Colin Murdoch, Sr. Amb. Ramez Hadeed and Ambassador John Ashe

Prime Minister the Honourable Baldwin Spencer participated in the largest summit in United Nations history, part of which he served as Chair of an interactive round-table of Heads of State and Government.

The 2005 World Summit, was convened over a three (3) day period to consider the status of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), and to take decisions on Secretary-General Kofi Annan's agenda for reforming the United Nations.

"I am pleased with the pledge we world leaders have made to give new momentum to global development goals and to strengthen the 60-year-old world body, so that it can live up to the ideals on which it was founded," said the Prime Minister, after the adoption by over 150 Heads of State and Government of a resolution containing the outcome document of the 2005 World Summit. The document contained a wide range of global issues, from boosting development in poor countries and combating terrorism, as well as to create new United Nations bodies for peace building and human rights.

"Of particular importance was the strong and unambiguous commitment to achieve the MDG -- a series of ambitious targets, ranging from halving extreme poverty, to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and to providing universal primary education by 2015," the Prime Minister said.

In addition, he noted that the outcome document also highlighted the leaders' agreement to provide immediate support for "quick impact" initiatives to support anti-malaria efforts, education and health care, and acknowledges that peace, security, development and human rights were central pillars of the United Nations, while reaffirming that "development was a central goal ... and that sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental aspects constituted a key element of the overarching framework of the United Nations activities.

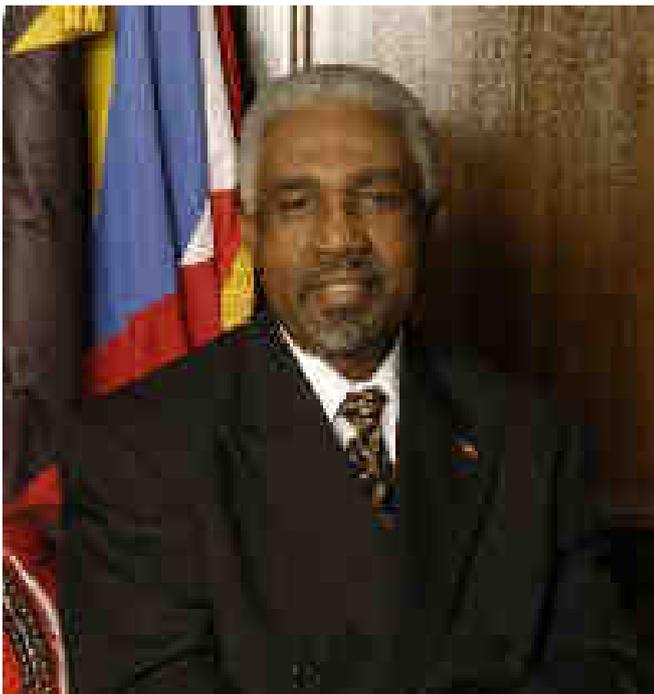
The Prime Minister also noted that a key aspect of the outcome was the reform of the UN Secretariat to make it more efficient, effective and accountable and commended UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan for the ongoing reform measures he has carried out to strengthen accountability and oversight, improve management performance and transparency and reinforce ethical conduct among staff members. "We have called upon the Secretary-General to adopt the best management practices, including effective use of information and communication technologies, with a view to increasing efficiency and enhancing organizational capacity, concentrating on those tasks that reflect the agreed priorities of the Organization," said the Prime Minister, and we await the proposals of the Secretary-General to the current session of the General Assembly on the conditions and measures necessary for him to carry out his managerial responsibilities effectively," he added.

Of particular note is the request to the Secretary-General to submit proposals to General Assembly for: (a) implementing management reforms; (b) ensuring that the United Nations budgetary, financial, and human resource policies, regulations and rules respond to the current needs of the Organization and enable the efficient and effective conduct of its work and request; (c) a review with analysis and
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HIGH COMMISSIONER'S MESSAGE



Dear Readers,

The month of September can be deemed fulfilling for the Government. Prime Minister Spencer twice addressed the General Assembly of the World Summit of the UN; first on the progress made on the Millennium Development Goals and again when he reported on the outcome of the High Level Plenary Roundtable that he chaired. He expressed enthusiasm on the progress made in some areas, and frustration with the lack of progress in other areas.

He noted that while much remains to be done for a world free from want and fear, the discussion underscored that the steps taken so far are significant in helping to meet the aspirations and concerns of people everywhere.

During his meetings at the United Nations, the Prime Minister met several Government leaders with whom he held bi-lateral meetings, established international relations, received a promise of assistance towards debt forgiveness, and he also took time out to meet Antiguan and Barbudans living in the USA.

Two very important agreements were signed that will greatly enhance our ability to attract

investment to our country: The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) and the Caribbean Open Trade Support (COTS).

MIGA was signed in Washington by Minister of Finance and the Economy, Dr. Errol Cort, while attending the World Bank/IMF meeting. He declared that, "Antigua and Barbuda's membership of this important multilateral agency is yet another step by the UPP Government to foster and create a domestic investment climate that is conducive to private sector led growth, both through foreign direct investment and local investment as well." The Minister explained that "Antigua and Barbuda's membership in MIGA would place the country in a position to compete for foreign investment with the required backing and support of the international financial community."

This was followed by the signing of a MOU in Antigua and Barbuda by the Prime Minister with the Government of the United States of America through USAID to provide technical assistance to build an environment to spur private sector development.

*In his address Prime Minister Spencer said that the signing of the MOU signals the commencement of the **Caribbean Open Trade Support (COTS)** initiative undertaken by USAID which would provide about US\$2 million on an annual basis for four years.*

The Prime Minister said "The Agreement complements the recent US\$10 million small and medium size enterprise initiative which the government recently established in partnership with the Stanford Group of Companies. It also promises to strengthen the trade environment, create jobs and investment, forge new public-private sector partnerships and improve disaster and physical planning frameworks."

It all augurs well for our country!

Dr Carl Roberts
High Commissioner



PM Spencer and Polish Minister Rotfeld signing the bilateral agreement

Antigua and Barbuda called upon to lobby USA on behalf of the Peoples Republic of China

Antigua and Barbuda along with other Caribbean countries are being asked to join forces in lobbying for the United States to ease restrictions on Chinese Nationals wishing to travel to the Caribbean on vacation.

The appeal came from China's Deputy Director General of the Department of American and Oceanic Affairs in the Ministry of Commerce, Jin Xu.

Mr. Jin Xu told a Caribbean Media delegation in Beijing that the Caribbean is becoming the destination of choice for Chinese holiday-makers; due to the major role its governments have placed in boosting their tourism products. He however noted that due to the unavailability of indirect access, visa applications are being rejected when Chinese nationals apply to US Embassies to use their country as a transit point to the Caribbean.

The leader of the Ministry of Commerce in China's capital has called for a unified approach among Caribbean Countries to lobby the US into having a flexible visa policy, thereby making it possible for Chinese holiday-makers to experience what the Caribbean has to offer. Despite the apparent blockade, Jin Xu is optimistic that the Caribbean's Tourism Industry will be boosted, since his government is currently in talks with Canada to use that country as a gateway to the Caribbean.

A suggestion was also made by the Dutch representatives on the Media delegation for the Chinese to engage the Dutch Government to use the Netherlands as another gateway to the Caribbean.

Last year, during his State visit to China, Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer signed an agreement with Chinese officials designating Antigua and Barbuda as a most favoured destination for Chinese tourists. Upon his return to Antigua, the Prime Minister revealed that plans are being put in motion to have the first plane load of tourists from the Asian Continent arrived on island before year end.

The Chinese Government has also commenced discussions with other Caribbean countries in a bid to create a direct air bridge from China to the Caribbean.

Despite the geographical location between China and its Caribbean partners, officials in Beijing are confident that achieving a tourism link with the Caribbean will become a reality in a short while because of the fruitful diplomatic relations it has with 15 Caribbean states.

Antigua and Barbuda establishes diplomatic relations with Poland

On 13th September, Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland, Adam Daniel Rotfeld met to sign agreements establishing diplomatic relations.

During the meeting, Prime Minister Spencer stated that his government is pleased to establish diplomatic relations with Poland, which recently joined the European Union, and hoped that relations would blossom into a wider relationship with CARICOM.

It was outlined that practical steps will be taken to deepen the relationship with CARICOM on a more bilateral basis and this will be developed during a Vienna Meeting in May of 2006.

The Polish Minister, who also attended the United Nations General Assembly hoped for some success with the overall reform of the United Nations.

Prime Minister Spencer said that reform of the organs of the United Nations is needed and it has been disappointing that nations have not been able to reach a consensus on any form of reform.

Dr Cort leads delegation to Annual Meetings of the World Bank/IMF in Washington

On 24th September, Minister of Finance and Economy, Dr Errol Cort headed a delegation to the Annual Meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in Washington, D.C. In his capacity as Finance Minister, Dr. Cort is also Antigua and Barbuda's Governor of both the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Minister Cort was in attendance at the Opening Joint Session that was chaired by the Minister of Finance of the Democratic

Republic of Congo, Andre Philippe Futa.

In his address to the Governors, Chairman Futa called for international co-operation at all levels in the face of wars, terrorism, rising oil prices, inflationary tendencies and natural disaster occurrences. Dr. Cort was also on hand for the two featured addresses by the new President of the World Bank, Mr. Paul Wolfowitz, and the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Mr. Del Rato.

While at the Meetings, the Finance Minister participated in a special Small States Forum that was chaired by the Prime Minister of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis, Denzil Douglas. The Forum focused on a number of issues critical to the development of small states, and special attention was given to small states' vulnerabilities to natural disaster, and the role of insurance in that regard.

The high point of the Minister's visit to the Annual Meetings was the signing of an Agreement between Antigua and Barbuda and the World Bank formally making Antigua and Barbuda a member of the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA). The agreement was signed on 26th September, and will provide the necessary guarantee to foreign investors desirous of investing in Antigua and Barbuda.

According to Dr. Cort, Antigua and Barbuda's membership of this important multilateral agency is yet another step by the UPP Government to foster and create a domestic investment climate that is conducive to private sector led growth, both through foreign direct investment and local investment as well. The Minister went on to state that Antigua and Barbuda's membership in MIGA would place the country in a position to compete for foreign investment with the requisite backing

and support of the international financial community.

The Minister is accompanied at the Meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) by Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the United States and the Organization of American States, Miss Deborah-Mae Lovell, the Financial Secretary in the Ministry of Finance and the Economy, Mr. Whitfield Harris Jr., and the Minister Counsellor in Antigua and Barbuda's Permanent Mission to the Organization of American States, Mr. Starret Greene.

Farewell to Justice Joseph-Olivetti

Ministers and staff of the Ministries of Justice and Legal Affairs and members of the local judiciary bade fond farewell to Justice Rita Joseph-Olivetti during a recent reception held in her honour, at the High Court, in the Government Office Complex on Factory Road.

Justice Joseph-Olivetti, originally from Grenada, served as High Court Judge in Antigua and Barbuda from September 2002 to September 2005, this jurisdiction being her first assignment as High Court Judge within the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean states (OECS).

During her three year tenure, Justice Joseph-Olivetti, described as being very hardworking and thorough, had also officiated as chairperson of mediation. A pioneer of this project, she was responsible for setting up mediation facilities on behalf of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court.

Minister of Justice, Colin Derrick, extended words of appreciation to Justice Joseph-Olivetti for her valued contribution to the justice system in Antigua and Barbuda, presenting her with a copy of the recently updated edition of 'A Little Bit of Paradise.'



(l to r) Attorney-General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Justin Simon, Justice Rita Joseph-Olivetti, Minister of Justice, Colin Derrick

She was also presented with the laws of Antigua and Barbuda, volumes 1 to 13, by Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Justin Simon, Q.C.

In response, she expressed her enjoyment of the work, with the promise that she would always reflect on Antigua and Barbuda with affection.

Justice Joseph-Olivetti has been transferred to the jurisdiction of Tortola as resident judge.

Italy's Prime Minister to assist Antigua and Barbuda in obtaining debt forgiveness

Prime Minister of Italy Silvio Berlusconi has offered to assist Antigua and Barbuda in further reducing its debt to countries around the world.

During a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Spencer at the United Nations Headquarters in New

**PM Spencer chairs
Interactive Roundtable
at United Nations World
Summit**

Antigua and Barbuda's leader Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer chaired one of four high-level plenary meetings as the World Summit at the United Nations continued.

In addressing the leaders, Prime Minister Spencer said that as a family of nations, their actions and decisions will influence the nature of the world and equally important, one which future generations will inherit.

He outlined that he was elated and humbled to take on the role of Chairman of the important round-table and outlined that as a member of CARICOM, his country supports the ideals of the United Nations.

The High Level plenary addressed issues relating to the Millennium Development Goals with most contributors focusing on the importance of MDG 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development. It is felt that developed nations have not met the Official Development Assistance goal with assistance declining to poor countries from 0.33% in 1992 to 0.25% in 2004. CARICOM states have not benefited from the recovery ODA and have seen sharp declines in assistance.

Major interventions during the plenary came from the President of the People's Republic of China Hu Jintao, CARICOM Secretary General Edwin Carrington, President of Zambia Levy Mwanawasa, President of Colombia Alvaro Uribe Velez and President Bharrat Jagdeo of Guyana.



Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer and Italy's Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi during the discussions

York, Prime Minister Berlusconi said that he would personally speak with other heads of government including France and other European countries with which Antigua and Barbuda has debt commitments; in getting them to provide debt forgiveness.

"Now is a positive time to achieve debt forgiveness and the reduction in debts and I will ensure that this is done, once I receive the necessary information from your Finance division on the countries with whom you have obligations," Berlusconi said.

The media tycoon also announced that he is presently constructing four homes for his children in the Non-Such Bay area in Antigua and once they are completed, he is certain that Antigua and Barbuda will become more exposed to the world because of the European media attention they will receive.

Prime Minister Spencer during the discussions thanked Prime Minister Berlusconi for his country's role in the reduction of the National Debt and expressed the hope that other European countries will follow.

He also discussed with the Italian Prime Minister, assistance in the construction of a network of roads in the state which he said need to be significantly improved.

Prime Minister Berlusconi immediately stated that he will request of Italian architect Gamonde to evaluate the road situation in the country and report on how best some of the largest road construction companies in Italy can assist Antigua and Barbuda.

The Italian leader who regularly vacations in Antigua also announced that he will be sending a delegation of business persons to evaluate how trade between the two countries can be improved.

Both men pledged to continue the good relations, with the Italian Prime Minister outlining that he will continue providing assistance in the development of Antigua and Barbuda's economy.





Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer seated next to Canada's Prime Minister Paul Martin

PM Spencer and CARICOM Heads hold meeting with Canada's Prime Minister

On the 15th September, Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer and his CARICOM colleagues held a breakfast meeting with Canada's Prime Minister, Paul Martin, which was designed to enhance the relationship between Canada and the region.

Prime Minister Spencer said that discussions were held on finalizing the Canada/CARICOM Trade Agreement and also called for a CARICOM/Canada Summit to re-ignite the strong historical ties that has waned over the years. Heads also expressed the need for more bilateral relations with Canada.

The Prime Minister also noted that regional heads called on Canada to become an advocate for the grouping in the international arena on matters affecting them. He said that of particular importance to the region is the issue of climate change and its effects on coastal countries. It was agreed that CARICOM would have full representation at a

Climate Change meeting in Montreal later this year to discuss the issue.

The current situation in Haiti and its readiness for general elections later this year was also discussed at length with Canada. CARICOM leaders ventilated their concerns and looked at ways of finding a solution.

Following the meeting with Prime Minister Martin, Prime Minister Spencer held a bilateral meeting with President of Nigeria His Excellency Chief Olusegun Obasanjo.

During the meeting Prime Minister Spencer discussed issues affecting Small Island Developing States, which he hoped will be raised during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in November in Malta, which will be chaired by President Obasanjo.

President Obasanjo also reissued an invitation he extended while in Antigua and Barbuda in August, for Prime Minister Spencer to pay an official visit to Nigeria.

Minister of Justice addresses WIPO General Assemblies Meeting in Geneva

On second day of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) General Assemblies Meetings in Geneva, the Minister of Justice, Colin Derrick addressed the General Assembly on the controversial question of the proposed programme and budget for 2006-2007 on behalf of the Delegation of Antigua and Barbuda and on behalf of the Caribbean states represented at the General Assemblies.

During the period September 2003 to August 2005, the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) has been

confronted with a financial crisis, which is alleged to be as a result of financial mismanagement.

The Organisation's general financial practices were questioned by the Member States during WIPO's General Assemblies Meetings in 2004, and consequently a decision was made during the 2004 General Assemblies Meetings for an investigation to be conducted on the financial management policies of the Organisation.

A United Nations Joint Inspection Unit was given the mandate to review the management and administration in WIPO, and in 2005, several recommendations were made by the unit as to the best approach towards the implementation of strict financial measures that will address the Organisation's current financial crisis.

The Minister expressed that the Caribbean delegates supported the proposed programme and budget for 2006-2007, which is a balanced one that excluded any increase in fees and has no deficit. He indicated that the delegates were pleased to note that the budget took into account two main recommendations from the Joint Inspection Unit, namely -

- (1) that the budget for the next biennium should be based on the revised budget for the current biennium, and
- (2) that a comprehensive desk-to-desk assessment of the human and financial resources of WIPO should be undertaken and that, based on the result of this exercise, there might be an adjustment to

Public Viewing and Unveiling of the Land folio Cadastre and Land Registry Project

The Minister of Justice, Colin Derrick delivered the feature address at a recent public unveiling of the Land folio Cadastre and Land Registry Project which was held at the Royal Antiguan Beach Resort.

Stewart Information International Inc., (Stewart) in collaboration with the Organisation of American States (OAS) has developed and implemented e-Government technology systems to support the development of real estate markets, providing a standardized Land Registry and Cadastre System for the Government of Antigua and Barbuda.

As a result of being selected as a Pilot and Demonstration Site to showcase the benefits of an Integrated Land Administration and Tax System focused on affordable and measurable results, Antigua and Barbuda has made significant progress in the reorganisation, modernization and management of its Land Registry and Land and Surveys Departments.

A demonstration of this System, clearly revealed the many benefits that can be derived both in the public and private sectors in terms of productivity, transparency, accuracy and greater efficiency in the preparation of documents as well as accessing records.

It also provided information on the opportunities of using this system as the foundation of a National Geographic Information System.



Ms. Sonia Cruickshank - Consultant, Economic Development Bureau for Latin America and The Caribbean, Mrs. Laurie Freeland-Roberts, the Director General of WIPO - Kamil Edris, the Minister of Justice - Colin Derrick and Mr. Alejandro Roca Campaña - the Director of the Economic Development Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean Bureau within WIPO.

the budget, to be decided by Member States in 2006.

Minister Derrick stated that the Caribbean delegates were awaiting the results from the discussions on the other proposals made by the Joint Inspection Committee that are currently before the relevant committees within WIPO for consideration.

The Minister indicated that the Caribbean delegates noted that there is a general increase in the activities regarding development cooperation, but that they are concerned about the 13% decrease in the budget for all bureaus including the budget for the Latin American and Caribbean bureau for 2006/2007 especially in the context of the Cooperation for Development Agreement that was signed between WIPO and the Caribbean Ministers responsible for Intellectual Property in 2003.

He expressed the hope that this decrease will not affect the full implementation of the agreement and the Caribbean delegates are looking forward to further engagement with WIPO in this regard.

He concluded that the Caribbean delegates also supported the engagement of the external auditors to examine the financial practices of WIPO, the establishment of a WIPO Audit Committee and the adoption of the internal audit charter by WIPO.

It was agreed that those measures are expected to bring transparency to the financial management of WIPO.





Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer and Prime Minister Halldor Asgrimsson of Iceland

Iceland and Antigua and Barbuda to develop closer relations

Antigua and Barbuda is to develop closer links with Iceland. This was agreed at a meeting at the United Nations between Prime Minister Baldwin

Spencer and the Prime Minister of Iceland Mr Halldor Asgrimsson .

During the bilateral discussions, it was agreed that Iceland would provide technical assistance to Antigua and Barbuda in the area of deep-sea fishing. Mr. Asgrimsson said that his government is willing to offer six-month scholarships in

fisheries to Antigua and Barbuda students to learn modern techniques in fishing.

The Prime Minister of Iceland, who is a former Minister of Fisheries outlined that fisheries has made Iceland a rich nation and countries need to utilize their fisheries resources in a productive way to develop their economies.

Prime Minister Spencer thanked the Iceland Prime Minister for his government's generous offer and outlined that his government would also like to enter into discussions on ways that country can assist in improving his country's coast guard capabilities.

Prime Minister Asgrimsson urged Prime Minister Spencer to send a technical team to Iceland to explore avenues of developing the areas discussed.



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recommendations on opportunities for programmatic shifts in the work of the Organization; (d) a detailed proposal on the framework for a one-time staff buyout to improve personnel structure and quality, including an indication of costs involved and mechanisms to ensure that it achieves its intended purpose; and (e) an independent external evaluation of the United Nations, including the specialized agencies', auditing and oversight system, including the roles and responsibilities of management, with due regard to the nature of the auditing and oversight bodies in question.

"Because of the financial implications of these proposals, they will be considered by the General Assembly's Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (Fifth Committee), which will be chaired throughout the current (60th) session by our UN Ambassador Dr. John W. Ashe. He will have the unenviable but nevertheless important task of giving administrative /budgetary context to the agreements on reform that we leaders have forged at this Summit," said the Prime Minister.

In his overall assessment of the Summit the Prime Minister said "much has been achieved, but with the lack of a decisive agreement on the important issue of reform of the UN Security Council, more work needs to be done.

Prime Minister Spencer also had high praise for Ambassador Ashe and his staff at the Mission for the excellent work done in preparation for and during his visit.

"The staff at the UN Mission must be commended for ensuring that my visit was a success. The bilateral meetings have produced significant benefits for our country and the UN Mission is now charged in ensuring that the arrangements made and the bonds developed are maintained," he said.

Invitation

You are invited to attend the
Antigua and Barbuda National
Association's Independence
Service

on

Sunday 30th October 2005

at

3:00 pm

to be held at
St Mark's Church
St Mark's Rise
Dalston
E 8

And on

Monday 31st October 2005

Westminster Abbey
will dedicate

Evensong

at

4:45 pm

in Celebration of the
24th Anniversary of
Antigua and Barbuda's
Independence

Nationals and friends
of Antigua and Barbuda are
invited to attend

Please note that
Antigua and Barbuda's flag
will be flown from the
Western Towers
of the Abbey
on
1st November 2005



(l to r) Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer, Minister of Finance and The Economy, Dr Errol Cort, Mrs Mary Gilroy - Deputy Chief of Mission U.S. Embassy/Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, Ms. Karen Turner - Mission Director USAID/Jamaica and Caribbean Region

**Antigua and Barbuda and
USAID sign agreement for
Private Sector Development**

On 30th September, Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of the United States of America through USAID to provide technical assistance to build an environment to spur private sector development.

In his address Prime Minister Spencer said that the signing of the MOU signals the commencement of the **Caribbean Open Trade Support (COTS)** initiative undertaken by USAID providing approximately US\$2 million dollars on an annual basis for four years.

"The Agreement compliments the recent US\$10 million dollar small and medium size enterprise initiative which the government recently established in partnership with the Stanford Group of Companies. It also promises to strengthen the trade environment, create jobs and investment, forge new public-private sector partnerships and improve disaster and

physical planning frameworks," said the Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Spencer also stated that the initiative also supports the work of the Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority along with the creation of the Business Development Centre that would offer different types of product development support to Small Medium Enterprises across the nation.

Finance and Economy Minister Dr. Errol Cort commenting on the gesture by USAID said that as a small island state with limited resources Antigua and Barbuda cannot do it alone and that is why the partnership between Antigua and Barbuda and the United States through USAID is important as it assist not only the public sector but the private sector as well. "We have challenges ahead and in order for us to survive we must build local capacity and we are pleased to welcome our friends from USAID and thank them generously for this contribution," he said.



USAID General Development Officer Sean Hill in conversation with Chairman of National Development Foundation Gaye Hechme

economy that is attractive to foreign and domestic investors that is competitive and sustainable and creates broad-based prosperity for the people of Antigua and Barbuda.

Through this Economic Competitiveness and Growth initiative, we expect to help Antigua and Barbuda identify and eliminate barriers to competitiveness and enhance government efficiency; increase the private sector's

competitiveness in global and regional trade; and stimulate greater private sector led growth which will translate into increased opportunities for the people of Antigua and Barbuda," Ms. Turner declared.

An important component of the initiative will be public-private partnerships, in recognition that the private sector in part, is reliant on the government to have in place the policies and processes that facilitate private sector activity.

USAID will assist with reforming the investment climate in Antigua and Barbuda which includes examining and improving laws and administrative policies and processes that affect the private sector.

The assistance will also target the private sector directly to help them reform their business operations to increase competitiveness, to operate more effectively in the marketplace, and to interface effectively with each other and with the government to ensure the availability of services, finance and other key ingredients for successful business operation and competitive trade.

Antigua and Barbuda soon to benefit from Clinton Foundation

The country's HIV/AIDS programme will soon receive a substantial contribution from the Clinton Foundation Grant, due for disbursement in November 2005.

A special meeting of the OECS-RCM was held in St Lucia recently, and was called to access among other things, the countries state of readiness for the OECS HIV/AIDS Global Fund Grant in accordance with priority indicators against which each country will be evaluated and to provide an update on the status of the Grant.

The meeting was attended by the government representatives on the OECS-RCM, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health Mr. Lauchland Lake and the AIDS Programme Manager – Mrs. Janet Weston.

Antigua and Barbuda's allocation is **US\$2.1 million** over a period of five years, while the Government of Antigua and Barbuda is to match that amount covering that period.

The funds will be used for medication, outpatient primary and specialty medical care, inpatient medical care, laboratory services, equipment and capital improvements, prevention and education, training technical assistance, surveillance, monitoring and evaluation and programme support.

The Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) is a grant to the OECS for US\$11 million, to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS regionally. Out of this grant, the OECS Regional Coordinating Mechanism (RCM) was formed,

Deputy Chief of Mission at the US Embassy for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean Mary Ellen Gilroy said that the initiative demonstrates that the governments of the United States and Antigua and Barbuda can work as equals and is a commitment by the USA to assist the country in enabling it to compete internationally.

"The government of Antigua and Barbuda has made serious efforts to transform the economy and it has shown success as it goes along. The country has unlimited possibilities under the leadership of Prime Minister Spencer along with the untapped potential of citizens. There exists the capacity for creating a bright future and there could be economic growth that will also propel growth in the region," she said.

Mission Director for USAID/Jamaica – Caribbean Regional Programme Karen D. Turner, remarked that one of the key reasons for the programme is because the Government of Antigua and Barbuda has commenced actions to transform the government and the economy to create foundations for sustainable growth.

"We believe Antigua and Barbuda has opportunities to create an

comprising of 12 voting members, 3 non-voting members and a Secretariat.

The OECS RCM member countries; Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines have pooled their resources in the fight against HIV/AIDS. They will also act as a single unit to access the Global Funds.

High Commissioner wants Street Pastors by year's end

High Commissioner to the UK, His Excellency Dr. Carl Roberts told the Antiguan delegation of Street Pastors to 'fire on all cylinders' to set up the programme by the end of this year.

Dr Roberts was at the time speaking at a conference organized to bring stakeholders and the Antiguan and Barbudan delegation together to get an insight into the country's state of affairs, while at the same time appealing to the guests to lend assistance wherever possible.

Speaking to the gathering, Dr Roberts said that the crime situation is not at a panic state, but his Government



is being proactive, and not waiting until the problem get to an uncontrollable stage. He said he was happy to see the Antiguan delegation taking up the mantle to run with the programme and encouraged them not to waste any time, as the programme is vital to the survival of any community and by extension the country.

During the conference, which was attended by a number of officials involved in Street Pastors Initiative (SPI), representatives of the Antigua delegation made power-point presentations to the guests. President of Cops for Christ, Corporal William Holder walked the group through his organization and informed them of a new programme that will take members of Cops for Christ into the schools to share their faith, while at the same time encourage youths to avoid anti-social behaviour.

The delegation comprised Rev. Selina Joseph from the Antigua Christian Council, Rev. Joscelyn Martin from the United Evangelical Association, Sergeant Everton Jeffers, Corporal William Holder, Mr. Byron Maxam representing the police force and Collin Jno-Finn representing the Ministry of Social Transformation.

The Antigua and Barbuda Street Pastors have now returned home and are putting plans in place for the establishment of a Street Pastors programme in Antigua and Barbuda. Street Pastors has its origins in Jamaica but was launched in the United Kingdom in 2003 and statistical data indicates that crime and violence have decrease significantly where the programme is practiced.

The SPI is a collaborative effort of the Church, the police and the Government, commonly called the 'urban trinity', and involves Christians patrolling the streets to meet and share the concerns of people.

The SPI will work with other key agencies to assist persons who may need advice and or assistance where necessary.

The logistics of the programme are still being fine tuned, but Christians willing to become a Street Pastor will have to undergo a series of training sessions to effectively deal with the tasks ahead.

The delegation was in London understudying the Street Pastor Initiative (SPI).



H.E. Dr Carl Roberts making a presentation to Southwark Mayor, Councillor Vicky Naish

On 8th September, His Excellency Dr Carl Roberts hosted a farewell cocktail for the Management and players of the Antigua and Barbuda National Cricket Team in honour of their outstanding tour of the United Kingdom and Holland. Below are a few photos of that event -

