



# NEWSLETTER

## The Antigua and Barbuda High Commission

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### Throne Speech

On Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November Governor-General Sir James B. Carlisle presented the government's plans and policies for the coming parliamentary year at the Annual Throne Speech to a joint sitting of the House of Representatives.

During his speech the Governor-General said that his government will continue the programme of fiscal reform initiatives. The Antigua and Barbuda Sales Tax will be introduced in the first quarter of 2007 to further consolidate the tax system by replacing several existing taxes, including the consumption tax, the hotel taxes and the telecommunications tax.

He further stated that the government will implement a new and modernized property tax system.

The Sales and the Property Taxes represent the final measures of the government's tax reform initiatives.

The Governor-General said, "My Government will therefore implement recently passed legislation to provide personal income tax relief, introduce mechanisms to provide tax credits to businesses that support the development of education, sports and culture, enforce the compliance of the widened basket of essential goods, and give tax relief to pensioners and provide property tax allowance to all owner occupied residential properties.

Recent legislation, which provides for no property tax on agricultural buildings and lower tax rates on agricultural land will also be enforced.

To further build on the remarkable successes of my Government's treasury bills and bonds issue, created by the renewed confidence of the international and regional business community in Antigua and Barbuda, my government will continue this programme in 2007 to raise financial resources at much lower interest rates.

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Through the treasury bills and bonds programme, my Government was able to retire high cost debt, finance the voluntary separation programme, and fund critical infrastructural initiatives.

My Government will also continue to implement a debt management strategy developed by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) funded debt consultants. Once this strategy is fully implemented, it is expected that our debt stock will be reduced, the credit rating of Antigua and Barbuda will be improved, and more efficient mechanisms for debt acquisition, monitoring and management will be in place."



*Governor-General Sir James B. Carlisle inspects a Guard of Honour of Officers from the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force and the Antigua and Barbuda Police Force*

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# A MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY DR CARL ROBERTS, HIGH COMMISSIONER



91% African descent, 0.7% East Indian, 0.6% Syrian/Lebanese, 1.7% White/Caucasian and 4.4% Mixed.

The population then was made up of 53% females and 47% males. Apart from 1<sup>st</sup> generation Antiguan and Barbudans, there are also 3,996 Dominicans; 5,410 Guyanese; 3,335 Jamaicans; 1,492 Dominicans Republic and 831 citizens of UK living in our community among others. The family therefore is cosmopolitan and made up of immigrants from 39 countries beside Antigua and Barbuda.

The culture of our society has changed over the years and more so since the introduction of cable TV. The extended family concept is not as prevalent today as 20 to 30 years ago.

This is reflected in the lifestyle of our citizens. The number of older generation citizens living in "homes for the aged" has increased significantly. The style of attire of young people and old alike reflect similar tastes to those seen in the progressive and fast moving cities in the USA, Canada and the UK.

The number of churches in our nation has increased, so too has the number of bars, discotheques, brothels and places of nightly entertainment. The number of children being raised by single parents (mainly women) is on the increase. Can we therefore say that the quality of life of the family has improved? Our per capita income has certainly increased but so too has the number of vagrants roaming our streets. Walking our streets today, we hear many new accents and a few new languages being spoken.

As these changes impact our communities, what or whom have we really become as a nation, as a family? Are we being drawn together by a common bond of national unity or pride in our country? After all, 25 years in the life of any individual should lead to a clear demonstration of the character that person has become.

We are richer from the new vibrancy in our society only when and if the chords that bind us together are reflected in our efforts at true nationhood building. There should begin to appear a family richer in culture, reflective of the heritage of the various ethnic groupings and the best of the culture they have to offer. Each member of the family will then feel connected, respected and fully committed. Let us therefore work together with the help of the God we serve to build a better Antigua and Barbuda, a better region and a better world as one family united in our common goals.

Dear Readers,

In this message I will continue our discourse on the concept "One Family, Embracing the Future Together" which was the theme of our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations. Looking at this from a nationalist perspective in the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Magazine, I asked the questions "what family have we become? What type of people are we aiming to become? Who in reality demonstrates the characteristics of a true and proud Antiguan and Barbudan?"

In this series of messages over the coming months, I will attempt to address these questions I will now deal with the first question

*"What Family have we become?"*

The family referred to here comprises citizens of Antigua and Barbuda; "citizens" for this analysis is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as "a legally recognised subject or national of a state or commonwealth" and by the Random House Dictionary of the English Language as "a native or naturalized member of a state or nation who owes allegiance to its government and is entitled to its protection". Who then must be as classified citizens and therefore entitled to be members of the family alluded to above?

The 2001 census of Antigua and Barbuda gave the population size as 76,886 with the following dominant composition:-

**Dr Carl Roberts  
High Commissioner**



*Minister of Finance and the Economy,  
Hon. Dr Errol Cort*

## Dr Errol Cort addresses investment conference at Lancaster House

Minister of Finance and the Economy, Hon. Dr. Errol Cort on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> November addressed the Caribbean Investment Conference which was held at Lancaster House, London.

The Conference was a personal initiative of British Prime Minister, Tony Blair and was held under the theme "Transforming the Caribbean Economy: New Avenues for Investment".

The intention of the Conference was to draw attention to the many investment opportunities in the Caribbean region, not least those arising as a result of European Union-supported transitional programmes. It enabled participants to discuss ways in which the public sector could help the private sector to make the most of those opportunities.

Minister Cort addressed the gathering on the importance of Public Private Partnerships in the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union. He told his audience that "the private sector is a critical engine of growth and could have a catalytic effect on macroeconomic stability, high growth rates, efficient deployment of human resources and improved living conditions".

Minister Cort further told the gathering that "given the implementation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) and the demands of an ever changing international business environment, the coordination of public and private sector efforts is integral to the overall efforts at achieving global competitiveness within the Caribbean financial sector, promoting productive enterprises at a regional level and achieving stability within Caribbean economies".

The Conference also received addresses from the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, the Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, the Prime Minister of Barbados, the Rt. Hon. Owen Arthur and the President of Guyana, His Excellency, Bharrat Jagdeo.

## Antigua and Barbuda represented at WIPO Ministerial - Level Meeting on Intellectual Property for the Caribbean

Minister of Justice, Senator the Honourable Collin Derrick, has described the recently held Sixth Ministerial Level Meeting on Intellectual Property for Caribbean countries held in Barbados as a success.

The November 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting held under the auspices of the World Intellectual Property Organisation



*Minister of Justice  
Senator The Hon. Colin V A Derrick*

(WIPO) and the Government of Barbados deliberated on a wide range of matters, including a report from the Heads of Intellectual Property Offices, which contained a number of recommendations.

Minister Derrick noted that some of the recommendations highlighted the need for assistance in such areas as the formulation of strategies to promote innovation, technology transfer and economic development; and the provision of specialized training for developing national intellectual property policies and the undertaking of national intellectual property audits.

"The Ministerial Meeting agreed to foster collaboration between CARICOM, the OECS and WIPO in defining and determining the scope of regional administration in the area of patent, including search and examination. We also requested assistance from WIPO in developing appropriate frameworks for the protection of traditional knowledge, folklore, genetic resources, indigenous Caribbean culture and national heritage, particularly of indigenous



populations in Caribbean countries,” noted Minister Derrick.

He also outlined that a request was made to WIPO to assist Caribbean countries in the implementation of trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPS) and in particular advising on adjusting national legislation to incorporate existing flexibilities in TRIPS and other international IP Treaties.

Prior to the Ministerial Meeting a Meeting of Heads of Intellectual Property Offices of Caribbean countries was also convened in Bridgetown on 31 October and 1 November. The Meeting of Heads of Intellectual Property Offices was attended by Charlesworth Tabor and Mitzie Buckley, Acting Registrar and Deputy Registrar respectively of Antigua and Barbuda’s Intellectual Property and Commerce Office.

The Heads of Intellectual Property Offices identified the need for the inclusion of intellectual property as a subject in the curricula at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The importance of continuous outreach and public education with respect to intellectual property was also recognized.

## Internet Gaming and Criminal Deportees discussed with new US Ambassador

Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda the Hon. W. Baldwin Spencer has said that the recent changes in the United States Congress during mid-term elections in the United States present an opportunity for dialogue with the US on the Internet Gaming dispute at the World Trade Organisation.

During discussions with newly appointed United States Ambassador to



*Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer and Ambassador Ourisman during their discussions*

Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean Her Excellency Mary Ourisman, Prime Minister Spencer said that the recent legislation by the US Congress has been damaging to Antigua and Barbuda’s economy and that the door is now open for serious dialogue.

He emphasized the adherence to international trade rules under WTO and that the recent legislation by the United States challenges the credibility of the organisation. “There is enough room for common ground to be found with us reaching a balanced solution,” said Prime Minister Spencer.

Ambassador Ourisman who arrived in the region on October 31, one day after the departure of her predecessor Mary Kramer who has returned to the United States, said that the issue of gaming is a moral one for the United States especially for the protection of its children. Over 80% of Antigua and Barbuda’s Internet gaming clients are United States citizens.

Prime Minister Spencer during the discussion also spoke of US/Caribbean relations and the organization of a Caribbean conference in the United States. He also made mention of the Caribbean Basin Initiative

and the Caribbean basin Economic Recovery Act.

World Cup preparations were also discussed including the assistance which the United States is willing to provide under the Memorandum of Understanding which CARICOM signed with the US Homeland Secretary Mr. Michael Chertoff.

The provision of consular services by the United States Embassy for residents of the Eastern Caribbean and the issues of criminal deportees were discussed. Prime Minister Spencer said that the region would welcome an engagement with the United States to discuss alternatives on the deportee matter.

United States Ambassador Ourisman also met Minister of Finance and Economy Dr. the Hon. Errol Cort, Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs the Hon. Justin Simon Q.C., Leader of the Opposition the Hon. Steadroy Benjamin and the Venezuelan Ambassador, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps.

## Community workshop held to re-energize community groups

The Community Development Department, a division within the Ministry of Housing Culture & Social Transformation, convened a one-day symposium on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November in an effort to re-energize and reactivate community groups within the country.

During a brief Opening Ceremony, Minister of Housing, Culture & Social Transformation, Hon. Hilton Baptiste encouraged the leaders and other NGO's to work along with the division as it will have significant benefits for the residents in the community and the country.

In relation to the crime situation in the country, Minister Baptiste said, "We must reclaim our community otherwise none of us will be safe".

The Minister of Social Transformation said that if we all work together, nurture and care for our young people, it will make the country a better place to live but "we must get up and get organized."

Minister Baptiste also paid tribute to Ms. Judie Labadie, former Community Development Director, for all her years of hard and dedicated work. However, Minister Baptiste pointed out that the time has come for division to be given additional tools and equipment to ensure that the employees are equipped to handle the tasks at hand.

Throughout the day, the over 50 participants focused on Institutional Aspects of NGO's/CBO's which was delivered by Ambassador Anthony 'Mamba' Liverpool. Ms Roberta Williams looked at the topic of Sustainable Livelihood within Communities, while Mr. Philmore Mullin, Deputy Director of

NODS (National Office of Disaster Services) focused on equipping communities to handle emergencies and disasters. The last topic dealt with Maintaining Healthy Communities, which was facilitated by Mr. David Spencer.

## Sir Vivian Richards Stadium to be handed over early January

The Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Stadium will be ready for handover by the Chinese to the Government of Antigua and Barbuda on Saturday January 13, 2007.

This assurance came from the man charged with overseeing the completion of the Stadium, Chairman of the Inter Governmental Working Group Ambassador David Shoul. He said that all systems are on target for this date which will include a grand ceremony at the site.

Ambassador Shoul noted that he is very pleased with the report received from the recent visit by members of the ICC CWC 2007 Venue Tour Committee, although there are a number of concerns that were expressed by the ICC. "We are confident that the concerns the ICC has about certain sections of our preparation would be ironed out before their next tour in a few weeks time. We have a dedicated team of individuals who are involved in the preparations along with a number of other individuals who are prepared to lend assistance if the need should arise," he said.

The Chairman of the IGWG also outlined that a full inspection of the route for the placement of new street lights leading to the stadium was conducted last week and work by the Chinese contractors will commence in a few weeks time in conjunction with the Antigua Public Utilities Authority. "The route to the Stadium from the V.C. Bird International Airport was inspected and it was decided that street lights will be placed on the right side of the road, with a separation difference of forty metres (132 feet) for each post. These lights are another gift from our Chinese counterparts," Ambassador Shoul stated.

A few weeks ago Ambassador Shoul along with Prime Minister the Hon. Baldwin Spencer and members of the Local Organizing Committee toured the facility and witnessed the testing of the scoreboards and lights at the multi-million dollar facility.

"All of Antigua and Barbuda and indeed the world will be very proud of the finished product which is already distinguished by having the name of our National Hero Sir Vivian Richards. I am confident that we will have a top class facility which the government will hand over to the ICC on February 23," Shoul concluded.



*Prime Minister Spencer, Ambassador David Shoul, Ambassador Ren Xioping and members of the Chinese Construction Team working on the Sir Vivian stadium*

## 11-plus 'F' to high honours

Excerpted from NationNews.com  
Written by Melissa Wickhan

How did a poor boy from Antigua who failed the 11-Plus exam manage to create history by becoming the first person to ever graduate from the University of the West Indies (UWI) with a triple major?

One word - determination.

But it gets better.

Dale Destin, who graduated a recently from the UWI's Cave Hill Campus with a Bachelor of Science degree in an unprecedented triple major - information technology, meteorology and mathematics with First Class Honours - only spent three years in secondary school.

He grew up in The Point and Green Bay, two of the poorest areas in St John's. And, because his family was unable to give him a tertiary education, he went straight to work in construction while his schoolmates furthered their education.

But Destin, the son of a fisherman and a maid, was determined not to let his circumstances dictate his future.

"My academic life prior to Secondary School was not one that was outstanding. I did not pass my 11-Plus exam for reasons outside of my own ability. But, in Antigua, the system allows you two opportunities to gain a scholarship to a secondary school - the 11-Plus and post primary exams. I took the latter two years after I sat the 11-Plus and gained entry to a secondary school at the age of 14," he said.

Destin studied hard to make up for the late start, and gained six Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) certificates.

After working in construction on leaving school, he went on to work as a joiner at a furniture factory. Then he got a job at the Antigua and Barbuda Meteorological Office as a meteorological assistant. He visited Barbados twice to do the official Class 2 and later Class 1 training courses at what was then Caribbean Meteorological Institute, now the Caribbean Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology.

### Scholarship

Still not satisfied with his academic achievements up to that point, Destin applied to the World Meteorological Organisation for a scholarship to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in Meteorology and, in 2003 he awarded the scholarship.

It meant another trip to Barbados to pursue the degree at the UWI's Cave Hill Campus.

"I always knew that once I was granted the scholarship, I would pursue studies in information technology in addition to meteorology. The inspiration came from a colleague of mine, Mr Keithly Meade, who did the same a few years prior and was able to significantly computerise the Antigua and Barbuda Meteorological Office. This was very impressive to me," explained the 37 year-old.

But a triple major was farthest from his mind.

In fact, he admitted he was a bit nervous just getting through the mathematics required for his two initial majors - meteorology and information technology, far less considering it as a major.

Although he passed maths at CXC level, he failed it at primary and post-primary levels. But as time progressed Destin realised he had a knack for the subject and it was then that thoughts of triple major started to "ferment in my mind".

He picked up a number of maths courses and, after his first year, realised he could do all the credits required for a triple major which included maths.

He accumulated 143 credits - three more than is required for a triple major - mainly by doing a lot of summer courses.

"Being told there is no such thing as a triple major by most persons I was going to settle for the joint major of information technology and meteorology, but about three weeks leading up to graduation, I raised the matter with the Dean of Pure and applied Sciences, Mr Carrington.

"I asked him if the university officially recognised it as a triple major and he told me that there was no such thing as a triple major. I said: 'Okay' "

Not long after the conversation, Destin received a letter from the Dean that changed his life.

He said, "He wrote me and told me they had officially asked the university board to consider the matter. And I guess the rest is history."

Knowing most of his friends at UWI would have called him crazy if they had known what he was doing, Destin kept the good news a secret until it was announced at the graduation and if that was't all - he also achieved First Class Honours.

"It was shocking for most persons. They were like: 'How could you have done that? Where did you

find the time?' My friends and family are happy for me. It feels good to create history. I am proud and humbled at the same time. As I have told my Dean, I believe it could've been accomplished by other if the university was to officially offer {the triple major} as an option," he said.

Destin, who was also awarded the Dean's Prize for his accomplishment,

believes anyone can achieve success once they put their minds to it.

**Success**

He now lives in an exclusive suburb in Antigua, Cassada Gardens, and enjoys the fruits of his success.

"I consider myself lucky; I could have easily fallen through the cracks like

many youngsters in depressed circumstances. I also hung out on the block and did some things that could have got me in serious trouble. But my advice would be simply don't let the things around you make you feel hopeless or feel you have to follow the crowd. Believe in yourself and listen to the older ones around you."

*Governor-General's Academic Awards*

*His Excellency the Governor-General has been pleased on the occasion of the National Youth Rally to mark the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of Independence, 2006 to give orders for the conferment of the Academic Awards 2006*

<b>Nicole Roberts</b>	Top Student - Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE) (Antigua State College)	<b>GOLD</b>
<b>Ayokunle Ogunbiyi</b>	Top Student - Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) (St Joseph's Academy)	<b>Silver</b>
<b>Onika Dover</b>	Top Student - Jr. Secondary Examination (Liberta Jr. Secondary)	<b>Bronze</b>
<b>Nickolas Judnarine</b>	Top Student - Primary Examination (T.O.R. Memorial Primary)	<b>Bronze</b>

Office of the Governor-General  
 St John's  
 Antigua

11th October, 2006



*continued from cover page*

With regard to Education His Excellency explained that his government strongly believes that education continues to be the most effective method of empowering people and it is his government's intention to ensure that all Antiguan and Barbudans have access to education from infancy to adulthood.

Therefore, he said, "It is my government's intention in 2007 to commence construction of a new secondary school in our efforts to upgrade the current education infrastructure.

My Government will also ensure that a modern information technology driven Public Library becomes fully operational at the end of the first quarter of next year.

The Antigua and Barbuda Hospitality Training Institute also plays a pivotal role in the education system and the development of our tourism sector.

In 2007, the Institute will commence its "two-plus-two" arrangement with the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus in Barbados. Students at the Institution will be given the opportunity to study for an Associate Degree in Hospitality Studies or Culinary Arts. Graduates from this programme with a minimum GPA of 2.7 will be given credit and exempted from Level One courses of the UWI's Bachelor's Degree in Tourism at Cave Hill, allowing them to complete their degree in a two year period.

The completion of expansion work at the Antigua Grammar School and the expansion of other primary and secondary schools to provide additional classroom space will also be pursued.

In my Government's quest to pave the path to an improved data

management process in our school system, an Education Management Information System will be piloted in three secondary schools.

To further support my Government's policy of lifelong learning, the Adult and Continuing Education (TVET) Programme will be rejuvenated in Barbuda along with the construction of additional workshops at the Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Continuing Education and a Learning Resource Centre at the Antigua State College.

The review of the TVET Curriculum and institutional strengthening at both the Antigua State College and the Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Continuing Education will also feature in my government's programme to make knowledge the principle driver of national development.

The training of our teachers, instructors and managers will also be priority in 2007. Our educators and young people will be the main beneficiaries of scholarships to be awarded under the soon to be established Scholarship Procurement Unit within the Office of the Prime Minister in conjunction with our overseas-based diplomats. Members of our Police Force, Defence Force, and Nurses will also benefit from the opportunities that this Unit will provide. The Scholarship Procurement Unit will compliment the work being done by the Ministry of Education, the Board of Education and the Training Division.

My Government also remains committed to its policy of providing school uniform grant vouchers and scholarships and textbooks, giving valuable support to parents and children in our education system."

In the area of Tourism, Governor-General Sir James Carlisle said, "Tourism is our most important

sector, accounting for over 60% of GDP when all the impacts are taken together – direct, indirect and induced. To manoeuvre this nation on the challenging path ahead will require the unwavering commitment of all in this nation.

In 2007, my Government intends to exploit fully the country's enormous tourism potential. The strategic thrust forward is designed to, among other things:

- Upgrade the existing room stock to international standards, and establish a critical mass of new rooms led by the 5-star end of the market;
- Position Antigua and Barbuda as the Meetings, Conventions, Sports and Wedding Capital of the Eastern Caribbean and the Business Centre of the Sub-region;
- Upgrade selected sites and attractions and develop various facets of the product;
- Increase airlift service to both Antigua and Barbuda;
- Upgrade the room and physical capacity of existing small hotels below 25 rooms; and
- Generate a higher level of tourism awareness among the population.

Statistics from regional and international financial experts show that 2007 holds the promise that Antigua and Barbuda will realize economic expansion on a scale that has not been seen in recent memory. It is expected that the growth and development of the economy will be fuelled by higher output from tourism, other productive sectors, and infrastructure activity related to the hosting of Cricket World Cup 2007.

In this regard, 2007 will see the commencement of construction, in partnership with government, of the Bermello, Ajamil and Partners (BAP) Project which is a new 200 room



beachfront resort. The Jolly Harbour Caribbean Development Antigua Limited Expansion Project will also commence next year.

In 2007, the following projects will be completed boosting the hotel stock significantly:

- The Antigua Rain Forest Project – A canopy Eco-Tour Project to include adventure course, hiking trails, cultural theatre and a reforestation programme;
- Emerald Cove Development – A five star hotel comprising 291 rooms;
- Hodges Bay Hotel – consisting of 81 townhouses, duplex apartments, hotel and studio suites; and
- Sandals Grand Antigua Resort Expansion Project.

The influence of travel and tourism on a community is significant. Most obviously, tourists bring revenue. However, how this revenue is attracted and the numbers of people who benefits vary greatly.

To ensure maximum benefits to communities, my government will act as a catalyst for community-based development and will work closely with community-based organizations and enterprises to develop and implement community based tourism projects.

In this regard, the Ministry of Tourism will collaborate with regional institutions including the Caribbean Tourism Organization and the Caribbean Natural Resource Institute to devise a strategic policy and plan for the development of community tourism, as well as to sensitize communities of the value of their community assets, their culture, heritage, cuisine and lifestyle.

In addition, my government will establish a number of programmes, including increased training in small business management, environmental awareness, product development and

marketing and will also facilitate the granting of concessions and incentives designed to ensure that small and micro-businesses play critical roles in increasing economic activity and reducing unemployment.

My Government will also finalize arrangements with the Antigua and Barbuda Development Bank to provide soft loans to small hotels of up to 25 rooms for up-grading and refurbishing.”

*(For the full text of the Governor-General's Speech, please go to [www.ab.gov.ag](http://www.ab.gov.ag))*

## WTO Panel concludes hearings on Internet gaming dispute with presentations by the “third parties”

The WTO Panel concluded two days' hearings on 26th November on Antigua and Barbuda's challenge to United States' claim of compliance with the Dispute Settlement Body's rulings and recommendations on the Internet gaming dispute between the two countries, with presentations by the three (3) “third parties” to the WTO case, the European Community, Japan and China.

“That these three economic powerhouses and major trading partners of the United States have seen it fit to join with us in contesting what we have always maintained is a dispute about granting market access, is both welcomed and deeply appreciated,” said Antigua and Barbuda's Minister of Finance and the Economy, the Honourable Dr. Errol Cort.

“What is even more remarkable is that they choose to become active players in this WTO process and we believe that a crucial factor in their

respective decisions to do so was the pure merits of our case,” he added.

Ambassador Colin Murdoch, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs praised the three and noted that, “any member of the WTO can choose to become a “third party” in any pending dispute between two or more WTO members (parties). However, it must do so at the outset of the dispute process. Once the process is underway, other WTO members cannot join or submit written opinions. Moreover, they cannot attend the proceedings of the panel that has been established to hear disputes or of the Appellate Body, which hears appeals of the rulings and recommendations of the dispute panels. Against this backdrop, I would like to thank the European Commission, Japan and China for the ongoing commitment to this effort.”

Elaborating further on the process, the head of Antigua and Barbuda's delegation to the panel meeting, Ambassador to the WTO Dr. John W. Ashe, observed that “as is the case for the parties in a dispute, “third parties” are invited to make written submissions and are permitted to make oral statements on their submissions to the panel. They are then subjected to a series of questions from panel members and may choose to submit written answers at a later date.”

“Now that the hearings are completed, the next step in the process is fairly well-defined and there are a number of deadlines that we have to meet,” said Mark Mendel, Antigua and Barbuda's Legal Adviser.

“By the end of the day tomorrow, the panel will circulate a series of questions to each party and written replies to those questions are

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## “Best Wedding Island” award for Antigua and Barbuda

Antigua and Barbuda took home the ‘Best Wedding Island’ award for the second year running at Caribbean World’s travel awards held at the Four Seasons Hotel, Park Lane, London on 9 November 2006.

The Caribbean World Annual Awards, now in its 12<sup>th</sup> year, is firmly established among Britain’s foremost prize giving ceremonies, which honours excellence amongst the Caribbean islands and the services that provide comfort, entertainment and enjoyment for those who make the Caribbean their favourite holiday destination.

The magazine and its readers also awarded Antiguan and Barbudan national hero, Sir Vivian Richards who received a prize for ‘Caribbean Personality of the Year’.

Director General of Tourism, Lorraine Headley who accepted the prizes on behalf of Antigua and Barbuda, in conjunction with the High Commissioner to the United Kingdom,

Dr. Carl Roberts and Miss Carol Hay, Director of Marketing UK, expressed her satisfaction with the results.

“We are extremely pleased that Antigua and Barbuda has been recognized as one of the best Caribbean locations to tie the knot. The Ministry of Tourism has been working tirelessly to promote the island as a perfect romantic getaway and has forged a strong partnership with the Ministry of Legal Affairs who has made getting married in Antigua and Barbuda a simple, hassle free experience. This award comes at a great time for us as we look forward to welcoming over 25 leading travel agents and tour operators from the United Kingdom for a special Weddings and Honeymoons Familiarisation Trip where we will highlight those special attributes that make Antigua and Barbuda an award winning destination”.



recognized as one of British television's most trusted reporters.



The Antigua Barbuda delegation rubbed shoulders with special guest of the evening Sir Trevor McDonald OBE, a Trinidadian national and first black news anchor in the United Kingdom. He was awarded ‘TV Personality and Broadcaster of the Year’ having won more awards than any other British broadcaster and is now

*Photos featuring  
HE Dr Carl Roberts,  
Director-General of Tourism  
Ms. Lorraine Headley  
and Director of Marketing UK,  
Ms. Carol Hay accepting trophy on  
behalf of Antigua and Barbuda*



*Some photos of the gala event: Clockwise from left: Reception, dinner, some memorable faces and guests dancing the night away to the sounds of 'Dread and*



## High Commission celebrates Antigua and Barbuda's 25th year of Independence

On 5th November 2006 the High Commission in London celebrated Antigua and Barbuda's 25th Anniversary of Independence in grand style at the Holiday Inn Kensington Forum.

For some it was a night to remember!!

During the proceedings the Honourable Baldwin Spencer, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda delivered his address to nationals overseas via a pre-recorded DVD broadcast.

Guests included members of the diplomatic corps, cricketing greats

such as Sir Viv Richards, Richie Richardson and Curtley Ambrose; hotel representatives, members of the diaspora in the UK, and the travel trade.

Entertainment was provided by the very popular Antiguan band 'Dread and Baldhead' and guests danced the night away.



This also marked the first time members of the diaspora were awarded for their outstanding contribution within their community in the country they now call home. This is a project that we intend to continue as we are mindful that there are many more nationals who have indeed made significant contributions and who should also be recognised and awarded.

His Excellency Dr Carl Roberts and Mrs Pauline Roberts would like to thank all those who took the time to attend and sincerely hope that you felt that Antigua and Barbuda's 25th Anniversary of Independence was marked with the splendour that such a momentous occasion deserves.





(Right) The first Antiguan family of Butchers was opened in May 2006. It includes second generation of the Ferris Family - Carlton, Darren and Pauline. Farm Fresh Butchers - Purveyors of the finest quality meats operate from 78 Lower Clapton Road, Clapton E5 0RN



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due approximately one week later, in this case by December 8. Within this same timeframe, the panel will also send questions to the "third parties." In addition, each party may also submit a list of questions to the other party in the dispute. The panel will then make the factual record of the hearings available to the parties on December 22. This will be followed by the "descriptive" part of its "interim report," which it make available to the parties on 11 January 2007.

Finally the full "interim report" will be circulated to the parties on 25 January 2007. On receipt of the interim report, the parties will be given a period of time to submit their comments and observations on the panel's rulings and recommendations, before the final report is made available to the entire WTO membership sometime in early February 2007."

"We have every reason to be confident that, given the merits of our case and the fact that the US, having given an undertaking to do so, has done nothing to bring itself into compliance with rulings and recommendations of the DSB, we will prevail at this stage," said Kaye MacDonald, Antigua and Barbuda's Director of Gaming.

### FSRC takes Legal Action against BETonSPORTS (Antigua) Ltd.

The Financial Services Regulatory Commission (FSRC) of Antigua and Barbuda has announced that it has filed an application for a restraining order in the High Court of Justice, against BETonSPORTS (Antigua) Ltd.

BETonSPORTS (Antigua) Ltd., an interactive gaming and interactive wagering service provider, under the order is restrained from, among other things, entering into any agreement or arrangement to sell, transfer or otherwise dispose of cash and assets within or outside of Antigua and Barbuda without the consent, management and supervision of FSRC.

The application also calls for BETonSPORTS to account for its assets and obligations and otherwise provide such information that will assist the FSRC in ensuring that BETonSPORTS consumers are protected to the maximum extent possible and that Antigua and Barbuda's Laws and Regulations are adhered to.

The application for the order comes on the heels of an announced settlement between the United States government and BETonSPORTS and its

affiliates pertaining to criminal and civil charges levelled against the company by United States authorities earlier in the year. These charges, which resulted in the high-profile arrest of BETonSPORTS former Chief Executive, led to widespread disruption throughout the International on-line gaming community and represented a new assault on cross-border competition for gambling and betting services by the United States government.

Kaye McDonald, the Director of Gaming for the FSRC, observed "while the jurisdiction of the United States government over BETonSPORTS is questionable, by virtue of being the holder of an Interactive Gaming and Interactive Wagering license issued by the Antigua and Barbudan authorities, BETonSPORTS has acquiesced to our International jurisdiction over the company and its assets. It is important for the protection of consumers that whatever assets BETonSPORTS has remaining be properly available to depositors and other creditors and not be dissipated on fines or penalties or otherwise improperly disposed."

A hearing of the application is scheduled for 4<sup>th</sup> December 2006, at which time BETonSPORTS will have the opportunity to respond to the application for a restraining order.