

**NATIONAL REPORT OF BARBADOS ON
SUMMIT IMPLEMENTATION:
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Barbados has played an active role in each of the Summits of the Americas and is committed to pursuing and supporting policies at the national and hemispheric level that are concomitant with the development of its people. This report highlights some of the steps taken to implement the Summit mandates.

MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK BETTER

Electoral Processes and Procedures: Barbados is committed to maintaining electoral processes of the highest integrity and transparency as guaranteed under Section 41 of the Constitution of Barbados. There is a continuous registration process and the voters list is published on January 31 every year so that citizens can confirm that their names are on the list. General Elections are held every five years with the last such election held in 2003.

Several of our election officials have served in election observer missions both regionally and internationally.

Fight against Corruption: Barbados is a signatory to the Inter-American Convention against Corruption and is in the process of drafting the relevant enabling legislation that will allow it to ratify this Convention. In addition, Barbados is a state party to the UN Convention against Corruption and has incorporated the provisions of the Convention into its domestic legislation under the Prevention of Corruption Act, Cap 144, the Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (Preventions and Control) Act, 1998 and the Proceeds of Crime Act, Cap 143.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Human Rights of Women: The Government of Barbados signed and ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1980.

The status of women in Barbados has significantly improved over the past two (2) decades. There has been a noticeable increase in the participation of women in all areas of national, social and economic activity. Since 1992, the Government has made significant progress in reforming laws and enacting new legislation to improve the status of women and to eliminate the legal areas of discrimination against them.

The Government is in the process of drafting legislation to protect individuals from sexual harassment at the work place and the proposed Employment Rights Bill makes

provision to protect employees with family responsibility from arbitrary dismissal. The Government of Barbados is also committed to the eradication of all forms of violence against women and works closely with a number of local NGOs in pursuit of this goal.

Human Rights of Children and Adolescents: Under the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, all ILO member states which have not ratified Convention 182 must without being bound by each of its provisions, still gear their policies towards the effective abolition of child labour. It should be noted that while Barbados does not experience a problem with child labour, the Education Act (Amendment 1995) has set the compulsory school-leaving age at sixteen years. Barbados has also amended the Employment (Miscellaneous Provision) Act Cap 136 to alter the definitions of *child* and *young persons* in accordance with ILO Convention, No. 138 concerning the minimum age for admission to employment.

JUSTICE, RULE OF LAW AND SECURITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Combating the Drug Problem: Barbados has participated over the past five years in the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism [MEM] and has been an active participant in the first, second, and third Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) evaluation rounds, coordinating roundtable discussions with the relevant stakeholders in both demand and supply reduction. This process has resulted in a more cohesive information sharing partnership and has enhanced the commitment from departments individually and collectively.

The National Drug Plan was completed in 2001. The National Council on Substance Abuse has made significant advances in its *demand reduction* as well as *supply reduction* strategies. Its demand reduction capacity has continued to be strengthened through expansion of the coverage of training in drug abuse prevention research and on the supply reduction side its institutional framework has proven adequate to monitor and regulate the movement of pharmaceutical products and chemical substances. These measures along with counter money laundering initiatives continue to show steady progress.

Barbados has also enacted legislation dealing specifically with activities related to drug abuse (*Drug Abuse (Prevention and Control) Act, Cap 131*), guns (*Firearms Act, Cap. 179*) and international cooperation in relation to criminal matters (*Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, Cap 140A*).

Transnational Organised Crime: Barbados has agencies that effectively perform monitoring, investigative, reporting and prosecutorial roles as they relate to combating money laundering. The Anti-Money Laundering Authority (AMLA) was established in 2001 by the passage of an Act of Parliament; the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) of the Anti-Money Laundering Authority (AMALA) has monitoring and investigative powers

prescribed under the Money Laundering (Prevention and Control) (Amendment) Act, 2001. In addition, the Financial Crimes Investigation Unit (FCIU) of the Royal Barbados Police Force has the power to trace property and assets representing proceeds from crime as well as arrest, charge and prosecute cases of money laundering. Both agencies operate separately from, but cooperate fully with each other.

ENVIRONMENT FOUNDATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Environment and Natural Resources Management: Barbados is a small island developing state that depends significantly on tourism for its national development. The government is committed to pursuing policies that prevent environmental degradation and is a signatory to Conventions that address protection and preservation of the environment. The National Commission on Sustainable Development (NCSD) was established in 1996 and has produced a National Policy on Sustainable Development (NSP) which was launched in February 2004.

The national policy for energy in Barbados is geared towards promoting energy conservation practices and the use of renewable energy technologies, where possible, and becoming self-sufficient in oil and gas production. Plans to develop renewable sources of energy are focused on wind energy, solar photovoltaic, solar thermal, fuel cell and biogas/biomass. There are currently legislative proposals to deal with proper disposal of oil wastes, storage of products and remediation of vacated sites.

National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Barbados - Barbados ratified the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in December 1993 and has developed a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) to conserve local biological diversity and promote sustainable use. The strategy and action plan treats to a variety of issues including capacity building; legislation and policy revision and formulation; monitoring and mitigation; public education; incentives development; land use planning; in situ and ex situ conservation; biodiversity access and benefit sharing; and biosafety and biotechnology transfer.

There is also existing domestic legislation including the Marine Areas (Preservation and Enhancement) Act; Coastal Zone Management Act which make provisions for the conservation and management of coastal and marine biodiversity; Fisheries Act which makes provisions for the conservation of marine biodiversity; National Conservation Commission Act; Trees (Preservation) Act; Cultivation of Trees Act; Soil Conservation (Scotland District) Act; Wild Birds Protection Act.

In addition, domestic legislation and regulations are also currently being developed with respect to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES); Zoos and Related Matters.

Climate Change - Barbados participates actively in strengthening the Global Climate Observing System and is a part of the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS). In addition, Barbados has a climate monitoring station, obtained under the Caribbean Planning for Adaptation to Climate Change (CPACC) Project which monitors vertical movement of the land.

LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT

The Government of Barbados has ratified thirty-six (36) ILO Conventions, including all of the eight (8) core labour standards. Compliance with these Conventions is achieved through national law and practice and the free collective bargaining process.

Barbados enjoys a healthy labour environment, which has been enhanced by the existence of a consultative tripartite partnership involving government, the private sector and trade unions. Under this arrangement a number of Tripartite Committees have been established at the national level and five Social Partnership Agreements have been signed – the most recent of which, Protocol V, was signed on May 1, 2005. The Ministry of Labour and Social Security has established a tripartite plus 144 Committee to monitor ILO standards.

Significant progress has also been made in the last decade in reducing unemployment from 21.8% in 1994 to approximately 9.9% in 2004.

EDUCATION

Barbados provides universal free access at the primary and secondary level and will expand its access to early childhood education and care programme from the current level of 80% to 100% by 2008. At the other end of the continuum, further expansion of access to tertiary education will be facilitated through the establishment of a University College of Barbados (UCB) by September 2006.

The Government has adopted the policy of integrating the mentally and physically challenged in the general school system and has provided newly constructed schools with resources to pursue such a policy.

Barbados has sought to revolutionise the curriculum by developing national curricula that would see the student being more effectively prepared to play a meaningful role in the social and economic development of Barbados. Plans are well-advanced for the introduction of a National Diploma of Secondary Education by 2006 that should gain recognition and acceptance in the job market and at post secondary/tertiary institutions.

The introduction of Spanish language programme in all primary schools is intended to sensitise pupils to the language and culture of the Spanish-speaking countries of the

hemisphere; foster appreciation for diversity and prepare them for the challenges of living in a multicultural community.

Science and Technology: As part of its Education Sector Enhancement Programme to introduce Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) into the teaching and learning process, four thousand, one hundred and forty-five (4,145) computers have been installed at schools under Phases 1, 2A and 2B of the programme. These computers were installed along with related peripherals such as file and video servers, network printers, digital cameras, electronic whiteboards and UPS systems. The Ministry of Education also procured specific Audio Visual Aids equipment that included DVD players, VCRs, camcorders and projection screens.

HEALTH

Communicable Diseases: In 1996, the Social Partners began work on the development of a policy on HIV/AIDS in the Workplace. This policy is based on the philosophy that the work place should be committed to "balancing its business needs with a compassionate response to employees with HIV/AIDS or other life-threatening illness, to enable them to continue to work productively while their health allows".

The Prime Minister's Office assumed responsibility for the National HIV/AIDS programme in 2000 and a National Commission on HIV/AIDS has been established with a Secretariat headed by a Director.

The Government has adopted a number of initiatives to address the matter of discrimination. Issues relating to HIV/AIDS have been covered in Protocol IV, the Social Partnership Agreement which was signed by the Social Partners on May 1, 2002. The policy on HIV/AIDS and other life threatening illnesses in the work place has been included in the Agreement and accepted as the National Policy.

The Ministry of Labour in keeping with the requirements of the National AIDS Programme, established an "HIV/AIDS Implementation Core Group" with a mandate to co-ordinate and manage the HIV/AIDS programme under its portfolio; provide a link to the National Commission on HIV/AIDS; establish a forum in which the Government and its Social Partners can embark on a collaborative inter-sectoral approach to reduce the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the work-place; and promote a supportive ethical, legal and human rights environment by disseminating work-place related materials to all Ministries, Departments and Organisations.

Barbados has made significant strides in fulfilling the commitments set out in its National Report. Anti-retroviral medication is available free to all Barbadian residents who meet the clinical criteria for treatment. In addition, counselling interventions,

including voluntary counselling and testing, supportive counselling and counselling to promote adherence to the antiretroviral medications are provided.

In 2004, the Ministry of Education revised its Health and Family Life Education curriculum to include age-appropriate modules on HIV education for students throughout the school system.

GENDER EQUALITY

Barbados has signed and ratified the International Conventions of CEDAW and Belem do Para. It also has enshrined in its Constitution the right to equality and therefore it continues to support and uphold gender equality.

The Bureau of Gender Affairs has been given a mandate to mainstream gender into all aspects of Government's programmes and policies as well as work in the area of gender sensitisation. The Bureau of Gender Affairs in collaboration with National Organisation of Women (NOW) has introduced a Gender Sensitisation Programme in the secondary schools to raise the awareness of students of the importance and implications of gender and hence start the process of creating a society that accepts gender equality as a national goal; to sensitise students about the causes of gender based violence and to introduce the topic of conflict management.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Barbados has acceded to a number of International Conventions for the Protection of Cultural Heritage including the World Heritage Convention, and the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property and is in the process of acceding to the UNIDROIT Convention, the new Underwater Cultural Convention and the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention. Barbados is in the process of drafting domestic legislation for the protection of its cultural heritage.

It is also proposed to restore the Empire Theatre, an historic structure of Neo-classical architectural design, constructed in 1922. The Theatre is one of only two in the English-speaking Caribbean. It is envisaged that the old Empire Theatre will be restored to its former glory as a state-of-the-art theatre cum cinema.

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