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NATIONAL REPORT OF BARBADOS ON ITS SUMMIT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
MANDATES OF THE FIFTH SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS

(Barbados 2011)



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The Permanent Mission of Barbados to the Organization of American States presents its compliments to the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States and has the honour to enclose herewith the National Report of Barbados on Summit Implementation of the Mandates of the Fifth Summit of the Americas.

The Permanent Mission of Barbados to the Organization of American States avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States the assurances of its highest consideration.

Permanent Mission of Barbados
WASHINGTON, D.C.

June 20, 2011



National Report of Barbados on its Summit Implementation of the Mandates of the Fifth Summit of Americas

INTRODUCTION

Barbados has always played an active role in the Summits process and remains committed to the development of its citizens. Barbados aims to fulfil the mandates emanating from the Declaration of Commitment of Port-of-Spain, the theme for which was aptly entitled **Securing our Citizen's Future by Promoting Human Prosperity, Energy Security and Environmental Stability**. Barbados is also willing to cooperate with like-minded states in the Organisation of American States (OAS) in order to share its experience and learn from those who have forged ahead. Barbados continues to pledge its support to the four pillars of the OAS: promoting democracy, defending human rights, ensuring a multidimensional approach to security and fostering integral development and prosperity.

This National Report on Barbados highlights the efforts undertaken to fulfil the mandates contained in the Declaration.

PROMOTING HUMAN PROSPERITY

Social Care

Conscious of the impact of the global recession on the country and the implications this has for the poor and the vulnerable, the Barbados Government has scaled-up its efforts to combat poverty in all its dimensions *and remains steadfastly committed to strengthening efforts to reduce social disparities and inequality and to halve extreme poverty by the year 2015*. This has been done essentially to safeguard the level of progress made as a nation and to maintain the quality of life that Barbadians have been able to enjoy, especially over the last four decades. To this end, institutional frameworks are being strengthened and participatory governance is being mainstreamed. Social protection is receiving special attention with the emphasis being shifted from that of mere stabilisation to that of the empowerment of the poor and those persons at risk including Persons with Disabilities and Older Persons. The goal of these strategies is to promote human prosperity and in the process, ensure sustainable economic growth and maintain social development.

Institutional Frameworks

Given its configuration, it is understood that the current global economic and financial crisis will further expose Barbados' economy to external shocks that will test the capacity of its resilience and ability to cope. Further, if not correctly handled, the situation has the potential to erode some of the gains made over the years in the social sector and slow progress in the effort to empower the poor and the indigent. As a consequence, Government was required to take a pro-active stance, and to adopt an integrated approach to the delivery of social services to mitigate the negative impact of the crisis. Among the responses of Government was the establishment of two institutional frameworks, the Social Policy Committee of the Cabinet and the Inter-Ministry Task Force to Monitor and Strengthen the Social Safety Net.

The Social Policy Committee of the Cabinet

The Social Policy Committee of the Cabinet has been established to coordinate the work of the social sector and fast track decision-making. It is therefore charged to consider social policy issues within the purviews, *inter alia*, of health, education, housing, employment and welfare. The membership of the Committee comprises the Ministers under whose portfolios these issues fall. Policy Papers informing on growing trends in the social sector, emerging challenges and new initiatives are submitted to this Committee where they are discussed in detailed. Recommendations concerning the formulation and implementation of policies and strategies to deal with these matters are also examined and any adjustments made as necessary.

The Inter-Ministry Task Force to Monitor and Strengthen the Social Safety Net

This Inter-Ministry Task Force provides a framework for the management of social risks. It is seen as an integral part of social protection and allows for a fully coordinated sectoral approach to the provision of social services. Its establishment is aimed at strengthening the social protection network and minimising duplication and fragmentation in the social service delivery system. Its specific task is to identify the ongoing risks posed to the vulnerable so that strategies can be put in place to prevent or minimize dislocation, displacement and exclusion and improve coping mechanisms. Membership of the Inter-Ministry Task Force is drawn from among the technical staff of the relevant Ministries and Departments and is chaired by the Minister of Social Care. Members of the Social Policy Committee of the Cabinet are also in attendance as necessary.

To date, members of the Inter-Ministry Task Force have been sharing information concerning the roles and responsibilities of their agencies; assisting with the formulation of policy and programmes to deal with issues identified; participating in various activities etc. An important achievement has been the creation of a data base of the services offered by agencies serving on the Task Force.

Mainstreaming Participatory Governance

Participatory governance is being pursued by government through what is being referred as the Constituency Empowerment Programme. This Programme can be described as a local governance system, bounded by the geography of the enumeration districts, which strengthens the capacity of citizens to bring about positive change at the individual and community levels, thus contributing to sustainable development at the national level. It has three (3) dimensions. Politically it is seen as a platform for promoting development and an avenue through which Barbadians can participate in the decision-making process and hence contribute to national development. Socially, it is a strategy to increase the effectiveness of development programmes, since the programmes are undertaken in response to the needs of the constituency which have been identified and prioritised by its residents. Economically, it allows for a more efficient delivery of services to the residents and the constituency as the level of bureaucracy will decrease. It also permits the creation of local livelihoods as residents with the required skills will be on the frontline of employment opportunities within their respective constituencies.

The objective of the Constituency Empowerment Programme is the broadening of the participatory character of governance in Barbados with the view to ensuring the equitable development of Barbadian society. It favours a “bottom-up” approach to development and provides the platform on which the social upliftment and the empowerment of all citizens will be pursued. As such it is seen as an important aspect of the Government’s overall poverty reduction strategy.

The Constituency Empowerment Programme has been operationalised by the establishment of thirty (30) Constituency Councils, one in each Constituency. The membership of each Constituency Council comprises fifteen (15) persons drawn from the respective constituencies. They represent faith-based organisations and other civil society organisations as well as individuals who have been nominated by their respective constituencies. Major political parties are also represented on the Council. These Councils are expected to partner with their constituents and together find solutions to local problems. Each Council receives an allocation of \$100,000 per annum to finance their respective programmes.

The Councils are supported administratively by the Department of Constituency Empowerment. The Officers of this Department are available to give guidance, conduct training and give financial oversight. The Department also provides the link between the Councils and the Ministry as well as other agencies with which the Councils need to interact. The Department also monitors the functioning of the Protocols which have been established with these Agencies and fast-tracks any referrals. A volunteer programme is also being developed as part of the Programme to further extend the reach of the Councils.

Programmes undertaken by the Councils to date include the conducting of educational programmes for children and young people; training in the area of entrepreneurial development; clean-up and beautification campaigns; recreational activities; the clearing of wells to mitigate flooding especially during the rainy season; and response to emergency matters. Support to community-based organisations, including sporting organisations has also been forthcoming.

Enhancement of Social Protection Strategies

Poverty in Barbados is considered to be relative rather than extreme as defined by international development institutions. The country also boasts of having one of the most comprehensive social safety nets in the Caribbean. However there are pockets of poverty which appear to be generational that are deemed unacceptable. Breaking this cycle of poverty has been difficult in that strategies tended to stop at stabilising acute situations rather than transforming them. Hence many of the persons falling victim to intergenerational poverty made little effort to emerge from their state of dependency. Recognising this, Barbados has sought to move away from the concept of dependence on welfare to that of empowerment. To this end, new interventionist approaches have been adopted which are supported by the use of information management systems and technology as well as research. National Assistance rates have also been increased.

Intervention Approaches

In scaling-up its social protection strategy, Barbados has institutionalised an operational framework based on the standard treatment model in social work practice which is being

called the ISEE Operational Framework. In this intervention, focus is shifted from the individual to the household through the introduction of the ISEE Bridge Programme and facilitated a more integrated approach to intervention with the use of a new instrument known as the Universal Intake Form.

ISEE Operational Framework

The ISEE Operational Framework comprises four (4) stages of intervention:

- **Identification/Assessment** -Needs are identified and assessed
- **Stabilisation**- Immediate and presenting needs are met
- **Enablement** -The necessary tools are given to pursue a sustainable livelihood
- **Empowerment**-Fundamental change is experienced by the client

This Framework will be adopted at all levels of intervention in the Personal Social Services Sector - the individual/household, group and community.

ISEE Bridge Programme

The ISEE Bridge Programme, which captures the operational framework guiding interventions in the Personal Social Services Sector, is an initiative aimed at reducing intergenerational poverty. Its introduction was based on the conclusion that more attention needs to be placed on the household as a focal point of intervention to improve the quality of life of the poor and vulnerable within the household if intergenerational poverty is to be reduced/eliminated.

A Pilot Programme, targeting 30 households will commence in July 2011 in association with the Organisation of American States. The intervention will include intensive psycho-social support as well as assistance from other agencies of Government and Civil Society to address the expressed needs of the identified households. The Programme will ultimately assist in strengthening the intervention methodologies utilised by the Welfare Department.

Universal Intake Form

As part of its coordinated approach to the delivery of social services within the Personal Social Services Sector, a Universal Intake form was introduced. What this form does is to “create a one-stop shop” for persons needing assistance in whatever form. No longer would potential clients be shuttled from one Agency to another to obtain the assistance they need.

The Universal Intake Form also serves to capture pertinent data that would inform trends and provide for evidence-based policy formulation. Qualitatively the form gives insight into client profiles and quantitatively informs concerning the level and cause of poverty in Barbados. Workshops were held with all frontline workers across the sector in the use of the form.

Information Management and Research

A barrier to efficient and effective delivery of social services has been the inability to retrieve existing data to inform policy and enhance the social service delivery system. To this end, the setting up of a National Social Care Information Management System is being pursued and a Website activated. A Country Assessment of Living Conditions has also been conducted.

National Social Care Information Management System (NASCIMS)

Acknowledging that the global environment has evolved as a knowledge-based society, development policy and strategies are becoming increasingly dependent on the flow of intelligent up-to-date information. Given the nature, scope of work and potential impact on national development, the mandate of the Ministry of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment and Community Development - with six (6) critical departments and a staff complement of approximately four hundred (400) persons, there was an urgent need of a technologically advanced, network. The process of setting up this network has begun. When completed, it will efficiently and effectively share vital information for the conducting of the work of the Ministry.

The establishment of NASCIMS will allow for service excellence to clients and the general public. It will also provide for up-to-date information on the status of social development in Barbados and inform policy-making and development strategies. It is anticipated that there will be the connectivity of all departments.; the expedition of information sharing; accurate departmental statistics; the efficient transmission of information; remote access of files and resources; and the centralization of information and data on shared servers where it is managed for confidentiality and security. NASCIMS will also greatly assist with client tracking.

To facilitate this initiative, all Departments under the Ministry are being computerised. It is hoped that eventually all Agencies will be linked to allow for information sharing, case conferences, etc.

Website Development

The Website as developed will provide information on the services of the Ministry and its Agencies. Ultimately, application forms to access the various services will be made available on line.

The Country Assessment of Living Conditions had four main components. These were the Survey of Living Conditions, a Participatory Poverty Assessment, an Institutional Assessment and a Macro Social and Economic Assessment. This Assessment is expected to inform on the extent and cause of poverty in Barbados and the existing poverty line. It will also chronicle the experience of persons living in poverty and evaluate the institutions that deliver the services.

The field work for the assessment is completed. The findings are being compiled and the first draft of the report is expected to be ready for submission in June 2011. As a follow-up, a Poverty Eradication Action Plan will be formulated.

Increased National Assistance Rates

National Assistance in the form of cash transfers have been increased in several categories namely children, the able-bodied unemployed, Persons with Disabilities and the Severely Disabled over the last five years, the most recent being in the rate paid on behalf of children.

Budget allocations to assistance in-kind have also been increased to meet the demand coming from persons who may not be on welfare, but who may be at risk in the current circumstances. At present, assistance in-kind includes the payment of utility bills, (water and electricity) house and land rent, food vouchers, clothing, educational assistance (books, uniforms etc.), spectacles, dentures and prostheses.

Other Programmes and Policy Initiatives HIV/AIDS and Persons with Disabilities

Barbados continues to pursue an expanded response in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The Ministry responsible for HIV/AIDS and its Agencies have been active both in the area of prevention and care and support. In recent times, however, increased attention has been paid to Persons with Disabilities who because of their disability are often excluded from the messages coming out of the HIV/AIDS Programmes, especially those who are intellectually challenged.

To this end, the Ministry through its HIV/AIDS Coordinator, the National Disabilities Unit and the Ministry of Education, Special Education Unit has been working to develop material to aid the communication process on behalf of such persons. To date a number of posters have been produced and work continues on the production of a Manual for teachers and parents.

For those who are visually impaired, existing literature is being translated into Braille. Audio books are also being considered for both the hearing impaired and those who may not be able to read.

Poverty Reduction Empowerment Programme

The Poverty Reduction Empowerment Programme represents an improvement of the existing Welfare to Work Programme. It is part of the overall empowerment programme offered in the treatment model to recipients of National Assistance and those persons at risk. Clients are offered skills training opportunities to equip themselves for the world of work. Personal development training is also part of the programme. It is based on the philosophy that persons can earn their way out of poverty.

The scaled-up version of the programme will include job placements and work experience as well as psycho-social support. It will also be an integral part of the ISEE Bridge Programme.

White Paper on Ageing

Barbados has an ageing population. At present Older Persons, those 65 years and over, comprise 13% of the population. As this trend continues, Barbados will be increasingly challenged to provide services for this special public. To this end a National Policy on

Ageing is being formulated. As a Green Paper, the Policy was widely circulated and feedback sought. It is now at the stage of a White Paper and is being finalised to be laid in Parliament.

The White Paper will guide all policy initiatives pertaining to Older Persons including Social Protection, Social and Economic Security, Supportive Physical Environments, Older Persons Rights, including Protective Legislation and Health Care. The Paper is also recommending the establishment of an Agency to focus exclusively on Elder Affairs.

Action Plan re White Paper on Disabilities

As part of the National Policy on Disabilities, the Ministry through the National Disabilities Unit is formulating an Action Plan which will expedite the implementation of policy pertaining to disability Issues. This will include the introduction of new legislation or the amendment of existing legislation.

Ratification of the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

As part of the Action Plan, Barbados proposes to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to which it became a signatory in 2007.

As a means of providing a more efficient and effective personal social service delivery system, Barbados has sought to reposition the personal social services sector. Institutional frameworks have been strengthened to facilitate a more coordinated approach. Methodologies have been upgraded with the use of technology which permit's the formulation and implementation of evidenced-based policies. New programmes and initiatives have been introduced which have seen a shift from the idea of dependence on welfare to that of empowerment. Where necessary, cash transfers as well as assistance in-kind have been increased so that persons at risk can better cope with the prevailing economic crisis.

Gender Equality

The Government of Barbados is in the process developing a National Policy on Gender and is committed to the development of all women. In the political arena, there is a level playing field for women and men to enter and actively participate. The Government has discerned that women are generally more reluctant to enter this field which is normally predominantly male, but has sought to encourage women to find their niche in politics. The Bureau of Gender Affairs in conjunction with the Caribbean Policy Development Centre have embarked on a number of training initiatives designed to empower women to take up the political mantle

A Barbadian female politician, Senator Irene Sandiford-Garner, currently sits as one of the three Vice-Presidents of the Commission on Women (CIM) and serves as a positive model for the women of the country.

The Government of Barbados strives to protect the rights of all women and children and seeks to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence in accordance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women "Convention of Belém do Pará. Legislation has been passed in order to

protect against incidences of Human Trafficking. A National Task Force on Human Trafficking currently exists but must be formalised. A Protocol on Human Trafficking to complement the legislation is being drafted.

Decent Work

Government through its medium term economic strategy has implemented a number of measures aimed at improving employment prospects. These include:

- investments in capital projects;
- increased funding to entities like Fund Access to assist such institutions in providing technical assistance to small and micro enterprises;
- maintaining employment levels within the public sector and using the mechanism of the Social Partnership to encourage the private sector to do likewise by adopting measures such as reduced work hours and implementing shift systems; and
- pursuing additional double taxation treaties in the effort to further develop the international business and financial services sector.

As the Ministry of Labour pursues its mandate of facilitating the provision of decent and productive work for Barbadians it will focus on a number of activities and programmes during the fiscal year 2011-2012. This will inter alia entail the following:

- assisting in employment generation through the sourcing of job opportunities for Barbadians in both local and overseas markets;
- formulating policies and implementing legislation with a view to promoting rights at work and enhancing other employment conditions, relations and opportunities;
- ensuring there is an adequate supply of well trained manpower in various branches of economic activity through improved delivery of training and expanded programmes;
- enhancing the Barbados Labour Market Information System to deliver reliable, accurate and relevant information to key agents in the labour market;
- continuing the development of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Programme as the principal means of workforce development and mobility;
- continuing to ensure the maintenance of a stable industrial relations climate by (i) enforcing and promoting labour, including workplace safety and health standards; and (ii) promoting good industrial relations practices throughout the public and private sectors;
- promoting standards of appropriate behaviour in the workplace;
- promoting a supportive, ethical and human rights environment in the workplace for people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS and other life threatening illnesses; and

- implementing a decent work country programme with the support of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Domestic Laws

The Ministry's legislative programme includes the development of the following pieces of legislation - An Employment Rights Bill, Anti-discrimination legislation and Sexual Harassment legislation. It is also planned to proclaim the Safety and Health at Work Act 2005.

The Employments Rights Bill is at an advanced stage of preparation. It seeks to confer on persons, primarily employed persons, new employment rights. This Bill inter alia protects persons from unfair dismissal and the infringement of other employment rights. It ensures that employees are given full details of their employment particulars. An Employment Rights Tribunal will make determination on such matters.

Drafting instructions have been prepared for anti-discrimination legislation. Through this legislation, no person shall unfairly discriminate against an employee or prospective employee in any employment policy or practice on the basis of race, place of origin, political opinion, colour, creed, sex, marital status, pregnancy, age, medical condition or disability. An important aspect of the proposal is the identified need to empower officers assigned to the Ministry of Labour's Project Unit whose mandate includes investigating and recording cases of discrimination against persons living with and affected by HIV/AIDS.

Sexual Harassment legislation seeks to provide remedies in respect of acts of sexual harassment. The Employment Rights Bill will determine complaints made under the legislation with regard to sexual harassment and will make awards in accordance with the powers given under the legislation.

The Ministry of Labour is currently addressing two (2) important matters before proclaiming the Safety and Health at Work Act 2005:

- carrying out an audit of the workplaces in the public sector to determine the extent to which safety and health conditions conform to the Act;
- obtaining consensus through discussion among the tripartite constituents with regard to Section 104 of the Act - the right to refuse dangerous work.

Promotion of Continuous Training Programmes in Conjunction with Workers' Representatives and the Private Sector to enable Workers to respond to the Demands of the Labour Market

The Ministry of Labour through its Barbados Vocational Training Board continues to consult with employers in industry in the structuring of training programmes to facilitate the moulding of a graduate that can adequately respond to the demands of employers as they enter the labour market. In addition, the Board continues to promote apprenticeship training where training is delivered at the employers' workplace. Other areas of collaboration with both the private sector and workers' representatives include:

- development of curricula;
- establishment of technical committees;

- membership on the Board of Directors of the Barbados Vocational Training Board.

Facilitating and promoting the movement of enterprises and workers from the informal to the formal sector, without adversely affecting the rights of workers

This cross-cutting issue falls under the ambit of several Ministries. In Barbados, there is no large scale effort to carry out the activities described in the above caption. However, it should be noted that the National Insurance Department which is responsible for administering the social security scheme, continues to promote to small business and individuals, the need to be insured against a number of contingencies so that should they occur, the worker would enjoy some level of social protection in their time of need.

Migrants and their rights

In 1967, Barbados ratified ILO Convention No. 97 (Migration for Employment). Regardless of their status, migrant workers are covered under the labour laws of Barbados and have access to the services of the Labour Department thereby receiving advice with respect to their terms and conditions of employment.

Protection of all people particularly women and children from sexual and economic exploitation

Barbados has ratified Convention No. 182 (the Worst Forms of Child Labour) and is committed to the precepts of that Convention. The Ministry of Labour has performed the important role of sensitizing its stakeholders and members of the public about the scourge of the worst forms of child labour through educational workshops, the print and electronic media.

National Food and Nutrition Policy

The CARICOM Secretariat in collaboration with the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) has facilitated the development of a Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy which was approved by the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) at its special meeting on Agriculture held in October, 2010. The FAO has now given its commitment to assisting with the development of National Food and Nutrition Security (NFNS) Policies and Strategies.

Barbados has already approached the FAO for assistance with preparing its own National FNS Policy and Plan which will be coordinated by the MAFFI in collaboration with the National Nutrition Centre of the Ministry of Health. This Policy will be multi-sectoral in nature and will therefore involve national consultations with the various government departments, stakeholders in the farming communities, NGOs, and other private sector organizations.

Market Information

As it relates to the marketing of agricultural commodities in Barbados, this is done primarily in an ad hoc manner, with there being limited planning and market information to inform production levels. In this regard, the MAFFI is in the process of engaging the assistance of a number of International agencies who already have a stated interest, in addition to the necessary expertise, in establishing Market Information Systems. The

Ministry of Agriculture has been working closely with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA) in addressing this issue. IICA has included this and other areas into its four year Country Strategy for Barbados, while the FAO and a number of other United Nations agencies (the **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development** [UNCTAD] and **CTA Community** have pledged varying levels of support.

CARICOM has been mandated to establish a regional Market Information System. A meeting was convened during the month of February 2011, in Trinidad and Tobago to develop the elements of the regional MIS (Market Information Systems) framework, action plans and initiatives for the implementation the regional MIS. The main recommendations emanating from the meeting regarding the way forward for the regional Market Intelligence System were:

- The NAMDEVCO/NAMIS model should be pursued by member states. This is a successful system being used by Trinidad and Tobago
- That the regional MIS system would be housed by NAMDEVCO since they have the most functional system in the region in addition to having the expertise and experience with managing an MIS system.
- That member states should give priority to the establishment of their national MIS.

A technical working group was formed to finalise the planning for the establishment of the regional MIS. (Barbados has two representatives in this group)

Education

The Government of Barbados continues to place considerable emphasis on human and social capital development through significant investments in education and related services. The Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, in collaboration with educational institutions at all levels, strive to provide conducive learning environments to ensure the inculcation of appropriate knowledge, skills, and competencies among all learners. Major areas of focus are the expansion of Early Childhood Education, the integration of ICT in education, the enhancement of the quality of education at the primary and secondary levels and expansion of access to tertiary education.

Social Development Priorities

Expansion of Nursery Education

The Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development continues to place a high priority on the provision of high quality pre-primary education for all children at the Early Childhood Education level. Currently, there are eight public nursery schools that cater to students in this age group. Four of these pre-primary schools were established in the ECE Expansion Project which was started in 2005. In addition, pre-primary education is offered in all public primary schools as well. While the Government of Barbados provides the general financing of this expansion programme, the MEHR has established a partnership with the Maria Holder Foundation to facilitate the financing of the construction and establishment of three new Nursery schools in 2011-2012 period.

Primary School Textbook Scheme

In keeping with the Government's pledge to introduce a Text Book Scheme for primary schools, the MEHR commenced the phased procurement and distribution of text books to all primary schools. The goal is to provide text books in the core subject areas of the national curriculum. To date, all public primary schools have been issued with text books to cover the curriculum in Language Arts and Mathematics. The process is ongoing with text books in the area of science being distributed in the current phase.

However, the Ministry is aware that approximately 10% of the primary school population experience serious challenges in acquiring the requisite texts and workbooks which parents are required to purchase for their wards. To ensure that this vulnerable group is not disadvantaged in anyway, the Ministry has introduced a programme to cater to the needs of those most in need of assistance with the acquisition of workbooks. The Ministry has included in its 2011-2012 budget the sum of \$500 000 to facilitate this programme. This policy was articulated by the Minister of Finance in the 2010 Budget Statement. The Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, in collaboration with the public primary schools, will institute a mechanism to effectively identify and administer this new policy. It is also anticipated that the Inter-Ministry Task Force to monitor and strengthen the Social Safety net will provide another medium through which the Government will be able to provide short and long term assistance to these and other vulnerable groups.

Alternative Education Day School

The existing out-of school suspension facility at the Edna Nicholls Centre was established in 1998 to provide short-term intervention and remediation strategies for at-risk and deviant students. In recent years, there has emerged a growing trend of students who have developed very dysfunctional behaviours that significantly challenge regular schools and that require more long-term intervention and rehabilitation approaches. In some instances, there are students of compulsory school attendance age who are either expelled from school or by virtue of the deviant behaviours that they display cannot be retained in the regular school setting.

Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development has embarked on an initiative to establish an Alternative Education Day School for "at-risk" students. The programme is intended for students between ages 10 and 16. This institution will offer an alternative curriculum which will be based on the national curriculum. The emphasis in the programme will be to teach students the types of skills they need to become productive members of society while engaging in meaningful life practices.

The Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development is expecting to renovate the old Erdiston Primary School at a cost of approximately \$1.8 million to establish this facility.

Psychological Assistance Programme

The MEHR continues to provide psychological interventions for various categories of students. Three consultant psychologists and two psychiatrists have engaged by the Ministry of Education to provide services under the Psychological Assistance Programme.

YDS/Sandy Lane/MEHR Primary School Counselling Programme

The MEHR has also embarked on a tri-partite arrangement to provide counselling services to students in primary schools. Five counsellors have been provided through the public-private partnership programme which is currently available in 19 primary schools. Officers of the Ministry have monitored the provision of counselling services and worked collaboratively with the counsellors to manage the cases referred to them. Two hundred and forty three (243) students were seen by the counsellors in the period 2010-2011 for counselling purposes.

Trade

Barbados has always been committed to an open, transparent and rules-based multilateral trading system. To this end, Barbados has been a member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) since that organisation was established on January 1, 1995.

Barbados has joined like-minded countries in the WTO in an effort to ensure that our concerns are taken on board and appropriate responses framed to those concerns.

In the regard, Barbados is the coordinator of the group of Small Vulnerable Economies, whose efforts are geared towards ensuring that the inherent characteristics of the smallest members of the WTO are recognised and that these states are not marginalised by the results of the ongoing Doha Round of negotiations.

The work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade is structured in order to ensure that the appropriate infrastructure is implemented and capacity is built which will permit Barbados to derive benefit from participation in the multilateral trading system and expanded trade.

Health

Access to comprehensive health care

Barbados' policies on health are predicated on the philosophy that health care is a fundamental right of Barbadians. Consequently, Barbadian citizens and permanent residents are guaranteed universal access to health services, including formulary drugs, in the public sector, without requirement for co-payment or user fees.

Reducing the burden of non-communicable diseases

Barbados recognises the importance of implementing the Global Strategy on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs) and has committed to executing the components of the CARICOM Regional Plan of Action on Non-communicable Diseases which was an outcome of the Declaration of the Heads of State and Governments of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), *Uniting to Stop the Epidemic of Chronic Non- Communicable Diseases*, 2007.

In 2007, Barbados established a high-level National Chronic Diseases Commission to plan, guide, monitor and evaluate the national policy on NCDs. The Commission has developed a five-year plan for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases. Consultations were held with stakeholders in the private and public health care sectors to chart the way forward in adopting the Chronic Care Model in the management of non-communicable diseases.

Initiatives to improve the surveillance of NCDs and their risk factors have commenced with the establishment of the Barbados National Registry for Chronic Diseases in 2008 (the first of its kind in the Caribbean); the mapping of risk factors and disease prevalence with the implementation of a STEPS survey (2007); and participation in the development of a minimum data-set of indicators to monitor chronic diseases and their risk factors across the Caribbean region (CAREC, 2009). It is envisaged that these initiatives will be supported and strengthened by the development and implementation of the regional surveillance system for non-communicable disease, which will be financed by the Inter-American Development Bank.

Barbados is committed to reducing the levels of the modifiable risk factors for tobacco use, unhealthy diet and physical inactivity. The Government of Barbados ratified the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) in 2005 and in 2010, enacted legislation to ban the sale of tobacco products by and to minors, and to prohibit smoking in public places. In addition, Barbados is pursuing an initiative in conjunction with other Caribbean countries to regulate and standardise the packaging and labelling of cigarettes in keeping with the FCTC.

Measures are being taken to improve diet through the development and promulgation of National Food-based Dietary Guidelines (2009), including guidelines for reducing salt and sugar in foods fed to children in schools ("*Nutritious and Healthy Foods in Schools: nutritional and Practical Guidelines for Barbados*") and other educational institutions, as well as the launching of an initiative to chronicle levels and sources of dietary sodium. The National Chronic Diseases Commission in January 2011 convened a consultation with local food producers and manufacturers to sensitise them to the initiative to reduce dietary salt intake, and to prepare a plan of action for the lowering of salt levels in locally manufactured foods.

A National Task Force on Physical Activity was established in 2008 to engage all strata of the society and all ages in increasing physical activity and to develop national guidelines on physical activity for healthy living.

International Health Regulations

Barbados remains committed to the implementation of the International Health Regulations. In 2011, the Ministry of Health established a committee to review local legislation and to recommend changes consistent with Barbados' commitments under the International Health Regulations, as well as to review and develop protocols and standard operating procedures at the ports of entry.

Having developed a National Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Plan since 2006, Barbados has been revising and strengthening its national influenza surveillance capacity to prevent, detect and diagnose influenza virus infection. Particular attention has been paid to the integration of the virological and epidemiological components of the

system and laboratory capacity was enhanced through training provided by the Caribbean Epidemiological Centre (CAREC).

As part of its pandemic preparedness, Barbados provides influenza vaccines to health care workers and to vulnerable population groups.

Halting and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS

Barbados is currently implementing the second Government of Barbados/World Bank HIV/AIDS Project, which *inter alia*, focuses on improving access to most-at-risk populations (MARPS) and key vulnerable population groups. This Project seeks to deliver a package of services that meet the criteria for accessibility, acceptance, coverage, intensity, linkages and quality of data. The project also seeks to improve the use of all available media especially new media and social networking to effectively administer behaviour change communication; to undertake research through which evidence-based interventions can be implemented; and to implement efficient and effective monitoring & evaluation mechanisms. Currently, the National HIV/AIDS Commission is conducting a behaviour change communication campaign that targets the elimination of stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV.

Antiretroviral therapy remains available and accessible to all persons meeting the criteria for treatment.

Barbados remains committed to the reduction of the incidence of mother-to-child transmission of HIV to less than 5% by 2015 as well as maintaining the current transmission rate of less than 1%. The coverage data on the prevention of mother to child transmission (PMTCT) was determined in accordance with UNGASS indicator Number 5, which assesses the percentage of HIV infected pregnant women who received anti-retroviral therapy to reduce the risk of mother-to-child transmission. The PMTCT coverage was 91.4% in 2008, 82.1% in 2009 and 88.5% in 2010.

Barbados is scaling up its PMTCT programme to improve maternal and child survival by achieving universal access to comprehensive PMTCT services. The following are the key components of this programme:

1. Review and update the guidelines on treatment for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission to strengthen the treatment programme for HIV positive mothers;
2. Develop and implement a national training curriculum for PMTCT; and
3. Monitor the implementation of the national PMTCT Policy across the health sector of Barbados.

Monitoring the impact of climate change

Barbados is one of seven countries participating in the UNDP Global Environmental Facility (GEF)/WHO funded project captioned "Piloting Climate Adaptation to Protect Human Health". This project aims to identify, evaluate, promote and implement climate adaptation policies and strategies to minimise the impact on human health. Barbados has established a Climate Change Focal Point in the Ministry of Health to lead the project implementation.

Culture

Barbados, as Vice Chair of the OAS Inter-American Committee on Culture, participated in the drafting of paragraph 44 of the Declaration of Port of Spain.

Cultural Diversity- Activities in Relation to the OAS Inter-American Committee on Culture

The Inter-American Committee on Culture (CIC) serves as a forum for discussion at the technical - policy level for matters of Culture. It comprises representatives from Ministries of Culture and highest appropriate authorities of OAS Member States. Its main function is to coordinate and to monitor the implementation of the mandates of the Declarations and Plans of Action of the Ministerial Meetings on Culture, as well as of those that emanate from the Summits of the Americas. The Technical Secretariat of CIC is the Office of Education and Culture of the OAS.

- a) Barbados, as Vice Chair of the Inter-American Committee on Culture (CIC), has been intimately involved in the formulation and the implementation of the Work Plan of the CIC.
- b) Barbados hosted the Fourth Meeting of Inter-American American Ministers of Culture and Highest Appropriate Authorities in November, 2008.

Preservation of Cultural Heritage

- c) Barbados is signatory to all of the UNESCO Cultural Conventions, including the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.
- d) The Preservation of Antiquities and Relics Bill will be enacted before the end of 2011.
- e) The Cultural Industries Development Bill should be enacted within the next five months.
- f) Barbados is seeking the inscription of "Historic Bridgetown and its Garrison" on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The final decision on this nomination will be taken at the Meeting of the World Heritage Committee in June, 2011.
- g) It is also proposed to restore the Carnegie Library. In 1904, Scottish-American philanthropist Andrew Carnegie donated a grant to sponsor the construction of a dedicated free library in Barbados. Carnegie's grants established free libraries in the United Kingdom, the United States, South Africa, Australasia, and the Caribbean and were part of his global, transnational efforts to promote free public access to knowledge and ideas. The building, located on Coleridge Street, is one of six Carnegie libraries established in the Caribbean. In 1906, the Carnegie Library was the first of his public libraries outside of North America and the

United Kingdom to open to the public. It is a coral stone building built in the English Renaissance style. The Library is now part of the National Library Service (established 1985), which is a major repository for Barbadian print and non-print documents dating to the 18th century.

- h) The “Steel Shed” in Queen’s Park in Bridgetown has been restored. This building played a critical role in the building of a modern Barbados and was the place where many voices were heard for the first time. The Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow, National Hero delivered some of his very important addresses at that location. It is recorded that the late Marcus Garvey spoke to a mammoth crowd in the Steel Shed in 1937. The Steel Shed also housed the meetings of the Moyne Commission, the entity set up to evaluate the causes and effects of the social unrest in the British Caribbean during the 1930s. This building therefore became a critical cultural space in which Barbadians were able to give voice to their aspirations for their families and their nation.
- i) Barbados continues to contribute to the preservation of our intangible heritage. One of the ways in which this is done is by an annual contribution to the on-going work of the Caribbean Lexicography Programme of the University of the West Indies. This programme seeks to document and to provide details on the nation languages (dialects) of the region.

PROMOTING ENERGY SECURITY

The National policy of Barbados is geared towards greater energy sustainability through the increase use of alternative energy and energy efficiency.

This is being assisted through a reduction of import duties on renewable energy and energy efficiency products as well as income tax deductions for end users.

A legislative review targeting these areas and plans to establish a finance mechanism for the private sector (Energy Smart Fund) are all part of a Sustainable Energy Framework being developed with assistance from the IADB.

Global leadership has been established in the development of solar water heaters over the past 35 years, with over 40% of all buildings having installations. There are also several examples of solar water heart technology transfer to other countries such as Trinidad and St. Lucia.

In addition to Solar Water Heaters other applications targeted include Solar Electricity, Wind, Biodiesel, Ethanol, Biomass cogeneration (sugar industry) and other forms of solar heating.

The Barbados Government is offering leadership in this field by implementing a number of small solar and wind projects with support from the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) as well as developing structures and policies to encourage involvement in large scale projects by the private sector.

The Government will continue to expand its local oil exploration that stands at approximately 1000 barrels/ day while making rights available to the private sector for the off-shore exploration through appropriate bid mechanisms.

PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The Governments of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) recognise that the primary responsibility for the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (MSI) lies with themselves and their national and local stakeholders.. Barbados' progress has to be characterised as fair given the prevailing conditions and ongoing global crises. There have been many successes but significant challenges still remain.

Barbados has met and exceeded many of the targets set by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Barbados still remains one of the few countries in the Western Hemisphere to develop and implement a national policy for sustainable development. The Barbados Sustainable Development Policy (BSDP) is our National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS), which provides a national framework, guidelines and principles that we can employ in our everyday activities. The policy promotes a motto of "Doing the right thing by doing things right".

The Caribbean region has been categorised as a "Global Hot Spot". Climate change will have a profound impact on the region and creates significant implications for living and lifestyles. The Government of Barbados recognises that in order to fulfil the MDGs pertaining to the environment, certain global environmental sustainability challenges needed to be overcome. The Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA), the MSI and Agenda 21 provide the overarching framework and template for achieving environmental sustainability.

Water Resource Management

Barbados is the 15th most water scarce country with infrastructure that faces challenges. However, when in relation to domestic water producers in the western hemisphere, the efforts of the Barbados Water Authority (BWA) compares favourably. The water authority is pumping at near maximum capacity which puts ground water aquifers under significant pressure. The BWA is currently being restructured in order to keep pace with the challenges that lie ahead.

Coastal and Marine Resources Management

In respect of marine and coastal resources, Barbados has embraced the concept of island systems management, recognizing that the entire island is a coastal zone. In this context, integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) has been the framework implemented with great success for more than 25 years. Additionally, given that many climate change impacts being experienced by Barbados and other Caribbean SIDS are within or near the land/water interface, Government has further sought to ensure that internationally recognized tools for climate change adaptation are well integrated into its mature ICZM program. Emerging issues which Barbados is currently addressing relate to increased incidences of coastal hazards, both as a result of climate change, and increased seismic

activity across the globe. Consequently, resources and expertise will be brought to bear on these hazards, further enhancing both social and economic resilience.

Pollution Management

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has executed a number of projects and initiatives over the last two years which covered policy development, monitoring and evaluation. The activities ranged from the revision of the ambient air quality policy to the review of the Standard Operating Procedures for the Department. From amending the national oil spill contingency plan development of guidelines on fuel and waste oil handling, storage and disposal practices. The department also liaises with other government departments regarding the management of solid waste.

Risk Mitigation and Early Warning Systems

Barbados has been at the forefront of the charge for a tsunamis and coastal hazards warning system for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions. In fact, Barbados is about to enter into a host agreement with the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, to host the first ever Caribbean Tsunami Information Centre, servicing the four major languages of the region, as assisting countries in preparing their people who speak a variety of creoles and dialects. Government, through the Standing Committee on Coastal Hazards, has been developing its own monitoring and detection systems, conducting hazard assessments, and building a national notification system for hazard alerts. As Barbados is the current Chair of the regional warning system's intergovernmental group, other countries have also been receiving assistance in the development of their own early warning capabilities.

Parks, Protected Areas and Green Spaces

Through the work of the Natural Heritage Department, Barbados is in the process of establishment of the National Park and a system of protected areas for the island. This will safeguard the biodiversity of the area including terrestrial ecosystems, habitats and species, create and support opportunities for sustainable local economic development through rural tourism and promote recreation and tourism within the Park which respects its special environmental qualities and where possible provides social and economic benefits for local communities.

STRENGTHENING PUBLIC SECURITY

The Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPF) continues, at the strategic level, to formulate and implement policies consistent with Supply and Demand Reduction and Harm Reduction with respect to illicit drugs. The Force has strengthened its information sharing capability in the region and internationally through specific systems, training and education. By virtue of this our capability to monitor and interdict drug trafficking has been greatly enhanced.

Our Harm Reduction focus has been targeted at public education, alerting the community to the dangers and ramifications of the use and abuse of illicit drugs. Specifically, the RBPF has expanded its Drug Awareness Programme in Primary Schools, through the Drug Awareness Resistance Education Programme or (DARE). It is

contemplated that this programme will be extended to our Secondary Schools.

Transnational Organized Crime

The RBPF has developed a capability in its Financial Crimes Investigative Unit to investigate and submit for prosecution, crimes of Money Laundering. Current Legislation has been given a recent and welcomed boost to the Force's capability through the promulgation of the Transnational Organised Crime (Prevention and Control) Act 2011-3. Complementing this, the Force has deployed more investigators to the unit responsible for such investigations.

The RBPF's Contingency Plans for terrorist incidents are subject to continuous update. Related training and simulations complement the updates. Continuous networking with international agencies in the fight, against terrorism heightens the Force's awareness of any possible terrorist threats.

Since 1982, the Force embarked on Community Policing as a crime prevention strategy and philosophy. Currently new crime prevention strategy and philosophy treat to pervasive public engagement through Community Policing and Problem Solving; the desirable integrated approach. This approach has led to the better management of Crime Prevention and has had the distinct utility of identifying criminal gangs and associated criminal behaviour.

Firearm crime poses a threat to individual and community well-being. This criminal activity can drive fear throughout our communities hence the Force accords it the seriousness with which it should be treated. There is a specialized unit to deal with the more organized and sophisticated aspect of firearm crime and the movement and use of ammunition. At the strategic level, the Force uses its international connections to monitor illicit manufacture and trafficking in firearms and ammunition. Recently the RBPF has been calling for and now has the capability of tracing the origins of firearms and ammunition used illegally.

STRENGTHENING DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

Electoral Processes and Procedures

Barbados remains 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 Register of Electors is published on January 31 every year so that citizens can confirm that their names are on the Register. General Elections are constitutionally due every five years and are held within the period due. The last such elections were held in 2008.

Elections in Barbados are managed by the Electoral and Boundaries Commission, established by an Act of Parliament and comprising a Chairman, Deputy Chairman and three other Commissioners. The Conduct of elections is governed by the Representation of the People Act Cap. 12 of the Laws of Barbados and the Representation of the People (Registration of Electors) Regulations, 1990, which provide the election process from the issue to the return of the Writ.

Several of Barbados election officials have served in Election Observer Missions both regionally and internationally, however, as a result of Barbados's reputation for free, fair and transparent elections, to date, there has been no request from International Organizations for Election Observers to be present at Barbados elections.

June 1, 2011