

**CLOSING SUMMARY STATEMENT  
CARIBBEAN EXPORT DEVELOPMENT AGENCY AT THE OPENING OF  
THE CHINA-CARIBBEAN BUSINESS DIALOGUE**

**Hilton Hotel Barbados  
Wednesday, August 5th, 2009**

The China Caribbean Business Dialogue was an extremely informative and productive day's discussion.

The proceedings started with opening remarks by His Excellency Mr. Qiang Wei, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Barbados, Mr. Songgen Dong, Vice Chairman, China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) and Head of Delegation and Mr. Philip Williams, Executive Director, Caribbean Export Development Agency. These statements provided a useful background to the relationship between China and the Caribbean, including references to the two previous Fora in Jamaica (2005 and China (2007).

The Head of Delegation from China and the Executive Director of Caribbean Export then signed an Agreement of Cooperation between Caribbean Export and CCPIT.

Under the topic **Promoting Growth amidst Global Financial Crisis**, there were two presentations: one by Dr Denny Lewis-Bynoe, Director of the Economics Department, Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) who spoke about the impact of the crisis on the Caribbean and the other by Mr. Xu Yingxin, Vice Chairman, CCPIT Textile Sub-council, who spoke of the response of the textile industry in China to the crisis and the possibilities for collaboration with the Caribbean.

During the next session on **Important Steps to Expand China's Investment in the Caribbean**, Mr. Robert Gregory, Chairman of the Caribbean Association of Investment Promotion Agencies and President of JTI, JAMPRO (Jamaica), spoke of the importance of the relationship with China, reviewed the trade and investment performance to date and provided some examples of areas for investment, such as West Indian Sea Island Cotton. In his presentation, Mr. Ross Jones, Partner Tax, Price Waterhouse Coopers, Barbados, outlined the tax regime for foreign investment in the region, with reference mainly to Barbados and generally promoted the region as a good place to invest.

Over lunch, the participants heard statements supporting the China-Caribbean Dialogue from both Sir Lloyd Erskine Sandiford, Ambassador Designate of Barbados to the People's Republic of China and the Hon. Dr. David Estwick, Minister of Economic Affairs, Empowerment, Innovation, Trade Industry and Commerce, Barbados. The Government of Barbados clearly has high expectations for the further development of its relationship with China, particularly in the areas of trade, investment and tourism. In this respect the Minister stressed the importance of language training.

In the post-lunch session on **Tourism**, Mrs. Susan Springer, Vice President, Caribbean Society of Hotel Association Executives (CSHAE) and Mr. Xu Shan, Vice Chairman, CCPIT Zhejiang, Sub Council, gave their perspectives on tourism development between China and the Caribbean. Mr. Shan's focus was particularly on the importance of Zhejiang as an economic development zone within China.

In his presentation, Mr. Desmond Brunton, Vice President, Operations, CDB gave a thoughtful analysis of the China – Caribbean relationship to date, including some of the opportunities and challenges. He spoke of China's membership of CDB, the need to understand China's policy to the region, to take account of legal and cultural differences and then highlighted some competitive advantages for the Caribbean, in the areas of tourism, financial services, commodities, forestry, fishing and food processing.

### **Next Steps**

For the future, Mr. Philip Williams, Executive Director, Caribbean Export suggested the following key steps.

- Continued dialogue, starting with preparations for the China Caribbean Forum 2010 in the Caribbean
- Identification of priority sectors for trade and investment (if necessary, through research), starting with an examination of the possibilities for textiles – sea island cotton, designer (training and exchange), involvement of CAFIF, possible participation in a textile fair in China in 2010
- Increased promotion of the technical assistance and funding opportunities offered by China at the Forum in 2007
- Increased trade and investment promotion activity – exchange of missions, participation in fairs (e.g. Shanghai World Expo 2010)
- Further development of tourism with China e.g. cruise, sports, multi-destination tourism. In this regard the need to facilitate visas and improve air and sea links
- Increased use of training opportunities, in language, professional services, ICT
- Identification and where possible resolution of challenges – including introduction of labour regulations to govern large construction projects and dealing with issues related to protection of intellectual property

Mr Williams thanked the visitors from China and all of the other participants and presenters for their contribution to a very successful Dialogue. He looked forward to a deepening of the relationship between China and the Caribbean and between CCPIT and Caribbean Export. Mr. Songgen Dong thanked the Embassy of the People's Republic of China to Barbados, Caribbean Export and all others for their cooperation.