

CONSENSUS OF CHAGUARAMAS

The Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community meeting in its Seventh Special Session at Chaguaramas, Trinidad and Tobago on 26-27 October 1999;

Having deliberated on a Vision for the future of the Region, and recognising the need for ensuring that the integration of the Region must be made more meaningful for its people, especially the Youth, adopted the **Consensus of Chaguaramas** as follows:

- (i) Heads of Government noted that the choice of Chaguaramas, the cradle of the Community as the location of this meeting was most propitious;
- (ii) The Heads of Government recalled the landmark document, **The Declaration of Grand Anse**, which was signed at the Tenth Meeting of the Conference at Grand Anse, Grenada, July 1989 and which set out the path for the Community towards the 21st century: They noted the achievement of the following goals set out therein:
 - (a) The revision of two Common Market Instruments, namely, the Common External Tariff and the Rules of Origin;
 - (b) Strengthened Customs Co-operation and Customs Administration;
 - (c) Provision (in Protocol II) for the free movement of capital and its facilitation by cross-listing and trading of securities in the existing three stock exchanges (Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago);
 - (d) Establishment of a Caribbean Investment Fund to provide equity and venture capital;
 - (e) Arrangements for the free movement of skilled and professional persons;
 - (f) Intensification of joint representation in international economic negotiations;
 - (g) Establishment of an Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians;
 - (h) Establishment and completion of the work of the Independent West Indian Commission;
 - (i) Creation of a Council for Finance and Planning and a Committee of Governors of Central Banks to enhance consultation, cooperation and coordination on economic policies;
 - (j) Removal of barriers to trade in goods;
 - (k) Establishment of the regional legal framework for the provision of air and sea transportation (Protocol VI).

Heads of Government also noted that two key elements of the Grand Anse Declaration - the Single Market and Economy and the Caribbean Court of Justice - are close to completion. In recognising that the legal framework for the Single Market and Economy would soon be in place, they accepted the offer of Barbados to host a special consultation **on implementing** the Single Market and Economy.

The Heads of Government recognised that there were some goals still to be achieved and set the timeframe of 1 January 2001 for substantial progress in the following areas:

- (i) Governance of Regional Institutions;
- (ii) Regional Human Resource Development ;
- (iii) Labour Mobility;
- (iv) Science and Technology development;
- (v) Regional Food Security;
- (vi) Regional Financial Institutions;
- (vii) Cultural co-operation and development;
- (viii) Harmonised development of our services sector;
- (ix) Regional Programmes to combat HIV/AIDS and Drugs;
- (x) Regional Programme for the Development of Sports.

In furtherance of this and recognising that Lead Heads of Government had already been assigned responsibilities for the Single Market and Economy; External Negotiations; Science and Technology; Labour Mobility; and Monetary Union, agreed that Lead Heads of Government would be appointed to spearhead developments in the following areas:

- (i) Services
- (ii) Environment
- (iii) Human Resource Development
- (iv) Information Technology and Telecommunications
- (v) Justice and Governance
- (vi) Sports and Culture
- (vii) Agriculture
- (viii) Tourism

Heads of Government also agreed to explore the issuance of a common passport for CARICOM citizens, for adoption by the year 2001. This passport will be a defining symbol of regionalism and offer to the Caribbean people a tangible demonstration of their identity as members of the Caribbean family.

Heads of Government, recognising the important role of civil society in the ongoing integration process, also agreed to convene in the year 2000, an encounter catering for the widest possible participation, under the theme **Forward Together**. This forum will provide for a free and wide-ranging interchange of ideas aimed at arriving at a consensus for a strategy for the development of the Region and its peoples.

Heads of Government further agreed that in this spirit, the Political Opposition should be brought in as partners into the framework of the consultation in the regional integration process.

Heads of Government agreed to review the structure and functioning of the institutions of the Community, including its Secretariat, with a view to better equip them with the necessary authority and capacity to discharge their responsibilities, as the Region seeks to accelerate decision-making and implementation in the regional integration process.

They entrusted the Bureau of the Conference of Heads of Government, with the responsibility of overseeing the review and restructuring process, the result of which will be considered at the Eleventh Inter-Sessional Meeting in March 2000.

**CHAGUARAMAS,
Trinidad and Tobago
27 October 1999**