

National Secretariat for the Fifth Summit of the Americas 2009
OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
18th Floor, Nicholas Tower,
63-65 Independence Square
Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago



Press Release

Summits to Bring Trade and Investment Opportunities to the Caribbean

(June 17, 2008) - Trade and investment opportunities for Caribbean enterprises and states are expected to receive a boost through the hosting of the Fifth Summit of the Americas and the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Trinidad and Tobago in 2009.

National Coordinator of the Summit process and the CHOGM, Ambassador Luis Alberto Rodriguez told Caribbean business leaders the opportunities were unprecedented.

He made the point while addressing the 3rd Annual Private Sector Meeting with Ministers of Trade and Industry, hosted by the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce (CAIC) in St Lucia on June 14.

“Hosting summits of this magnitude and importance, is a significant undertaking for our small island state, but one which opens up tremendous trade and investment opportunities, and expands the prospects for creating networks and alliances not just for Trinidad and Tobago but for our Caribbean neighbours as well,” the ambassador said.

“These meetings,” Amb. Rodriguez added, “also place Trinidad and Tobago at the forefront of crafting the development agenda for 2.8 billion people from all corners of the globe.”

This, he said, was “at a time when cooperation among countries and the building of partnerships are critical to addressing global challenges such as climate change, rising food and energy prices, and high levels of poverty.”



He said the business leaders and government ministers were meeting “at a time when many challenges confront the Americas and, indeed, the world, which require finding cooperative solutions among our countries and between our public and private sectors.”

The ambassador’s remarks to the meeting followed in-country consultations with civil society and media representatives and discussions with St Lucia Cabinet Secretary, Cosmos Richardson.

The civil society and media consultations were facilitated by the Organisation of American States (OAS) office in St Lucia.

Ambassador Rodriguez traced the origins and development of the Summits of the Americas process with the civil society and media representatives.

He stressed the importance of such an event being hosted in a Caribbean state and invited civil society, business and the media to become more involved in the process.

The ambassador also pointed to the development of a Concept Paper for the event which, he indicated, had received broad support from the countries of the Americas. He said this was achievable because of extensive consultations undertaken during preparation of the document.

The ambassador said the process will continue to invite and entertain views from civil society as preparations continued.

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About the Summit of the Americas

The Summit of the Americas brings together the 34 democratically elected leaders of the Western Hemisphere to exchange ideas and opinions on the main political, economic, social and security challenges facing the Hemisphere and to develop strategies and solutions to collectively address them.

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