



FICAC NEWS



August, 2011

Annual FICAC Caribbean Consular Conference held in Jamaica.

Hon. Dr. Kenneth Baugh, Honoured



Seen above; The World Federation of Consuls Award of Distinction being conferred on Hon. Dr. Kenneth Baugh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, by FICAC Director Dr. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig. Looking on are Chairman of the FICAC Caribbean Region, Mr. Antonio Alma and President of the World Federation of Consuls, The Honourable Arnold Foote OJ.



President of the World Federation of Consuls the Hon. Arnold Foote congratulates the Hon. Dr. Kenneth Baugh, Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Foreign Affairs & Foreign Trade after presenting him with the FICAC Citation. Also in picture are FICAC's Director, Dr. Mizra Baig & FICAC Caribbean Region Chairman, Mr. Antonio Alma.

Hon. Dr. Kenneth Baugh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, congratulates the World Federation of Consuls on its international work and achievements



Hon. Dr. Kenneth Baugh, seen above, addressing the FICAC Caribbean Regional Consular Conference.

our hard-working staff. Yet I must acknowledge those who would be inscribed on the Ministry's Hall of Fame were we to install one. We recall with pride:

- Sir Edgerton Richardson, fondly thought of as the father of the Foreign Service because of the solid guidance he gave in the early years after its inception;
- Ambassador Don Mills, who represented Jamaica with excellence and in such fine style at the United Nations, chairing the Security Council at times of conflict during Jamaica's first membership in 1979-1980;
- Ambassador Frank Francis, who was a chief negotiator in Brussels in the seventies in the ACP relations with the EU and was, to date, the longest serving Permanent Secretary of the Ministry;
- Ambassador Carmen Parris, our first female Ambassador who continued the Jamaican profile of excellence in Brussels;
- Ambassador Lucille Mair, another outstanding Ambassador to the UN, who served as our first Under Secretary in that Organization and
- Ambassador Patricia Durrant, diplomat par excellence, who served as our Ambassador to the UN during our second membership of the Security Council and was appointed by the then UN Secretary General H.E. Kofi Annan, as the first ever Ombudsman of the UN.

First, let me thank FICAC and Dr. Mirza Baig, Director of FICAC, who flew for 20 hours to be in Jamaica for this event, for the generosity and kindness shown to myself and the Foreign Ministry.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade has earned a reputation of excellence and I am always proud whenever I travel to regional and international conferences and other delegations commend the contributions of their Jamaican counterparts. Here too, many are the members of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps

who have spoken in high praise of the work of my Ministry and the expertise of our Foreign Service Officers.

This signal honour of the FICAC Award of Distinction is one which I receive on behalf of the Jamaican Foreign Service which I am honoured to lead. I am deeply grateful for this recognition which carries with it the charge to my Ministry to maintain and even improve on its high standards in these very challenging times. Occasions such as these always are a source of great encouragement to

continued on page 3

I have listed three men and three women as a sample of the heritage of intellect and indisputable expertise which have earned the Ministry the reputation it enjoys and maintains.

FICAC Praised;

Our relationship with the Consular Corps of Jamaica and through you, President Foote, with FICAC, is one which I have enjoyed. I look forward to the continued relationship between us and with my Ministry's staff. We have to ensure that we engage in productive and targeted advocacy for the improvement of the quality of life of all our peoples. Mr. President, allow me to welcome the non-Jamaican participants in this regional conference to beautiful Jamaica and to our capital city Kingston. Jamaica, as you all know, is a country that has produced many firsts - particularly in sports and academia. **Although we are small in size, we have made our mark on the world stage and continue to do so. In similar vein, I want to single out your own President, the Hon. Arnold Foote for special mention in his role as the World President of the Federation of Consuls. This is a Jamaican who continues to make us proud through his advocacy in the consular community and in his service to his country. I want to congratulate him on the strides he has made both as President of the FICAC and in his primary role as a nation-builder and as a leader in the local Consular corps. I know that hosting this meeting is of special importance to Arnold and his team and I wish you all success in your deliberations.**

I have taken note that next year is an important one for you as a

Federation; you will mark thirty (30) years since your establishment in Copenhagen in 1982. Your World Congress in Monaco scheduled for 2012 will no doubt be a time for celebration and for serious reflection as you examine what the next years will bring in terms of growth and positive change. For Jamaica, we will also have an important year – our 50th Year of Independence which, God willing, we will celebrate with exciting national events which will also include our Diaspora spread across the world. Indeed, we will be using the time to also reflect on the goals and objectives which we have set ourselves with a view to the future which we want to fashion as a nation state and as a vital part of the Caribbean region.

Jamaica's Honorary Consuls remain critical elements in our ability to maintain important contacts with the rest of the world. With only nineteen Embassies worldwide, we rely on our Consular Corps network, particularly in sub-regions like the Eastern Caribbean. We recognize that broadening that consular network will have to be part of a more modern approach to expanding our influence and our coverage overseas.

Your theme for this regional conference is: "Enhancing intra-Caribbean relations", which is very relevant. It speaks especially to how we craft our development objectives in the medium to long term. The theme implies that you, as Consular representatives, recognize the specific and critical role you play in supporting the region's development objectives.

I want to speak briefly on some of the key trends/policy issues in

intra- Caribbean relations that are occupying the minds of CARICOM Foreign Ministers and their advisors and indeed perhaps the wider Caribbean policy community. There is a very dynamic and fluid set of considerations which we need to grapple with in our region. I speak here of the elements behind the "politics of unity" that we seek to forge as a region with all the visioning, the advocacy and the renewed energy which will propel the engagement we seek. I want to point to the following: Challenges in CARICOM and the integration process, the CSME project, developments in our neighbouring country Haiti and finally, the gains that we expect from the Summit on Integration and Development (the CALC/CELAC process) - all of which are essential parts of the intra-Caribbean relationship in its various stages of development. I could touch on much more, but time does not permit.

Firstly CARICOM in its 38th Year of establishment;

As we think through intra-Caribbean relations, we recognize the public perception that CARICOM is failing and that there is an implementation deficit. Clearly we need to do more to demonstrate that there is much good that is happening in the CARICOM sub region. Most of this negative perception is bolstered by the complexity of the integration process. Our CARICOM region has growing populations which speak three different languages: English, French and Dutch, and are scattered across one of the largest salt water seas in the world, with an area of over 1 million square miles. A major challenge is inadequate transportation and airlift across and between countries, but our

political will must forge stronger ties in foreign policy coordination, functional cooperation and enhanced trading relations. We look forward to the new energy which the new Secretary General for CARICOM will bring to the post and to the organizational review of the CARICOM Secretariat which will set the stage for new and better management of the integration-building project.

CSME and Trade relations

15 million consumers form our potential market for goods and services. Approximately 6,000 Skills certificates have been issued as part of the facilitation of movement of skilled and semi skilled labour, approved since the signing of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas in 2001. There is much work to be done to grasp the potential for enhancing trade and attracting investments, both within the region and external to the region. I remain bullish that there are opportunities which our private sectors, including the small and micro-enterprises, can and must seize if Jamaica is to attain the objectives of Vision 2030.

Developments in Haiti post 2010

We continue to pay special attention to our sister state Haiti particularly given the specific political, social and economic assistance that is required by them for the reconstruction of that noble society with its rich and colourful history. Haiti must remain at the top of our agendas as members of the foreign policy community and we must work with President Miguel Martelly and his elected officials to bring our full weight behind their efforts at rebuilding and crafting a new and better future for themselves. The international donor community

must be encouraged to continue to help in this regard.

Widening and Deepening – the Summit on Integration and Development CALC/CELAC process

We look forward to the convening of the CALC Summit later this year. The success of the efforts of former President Lula of Brazil in the early years and the strong support given by President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, moved this process for deepening of relations between Latin America and the Caribbean into sharper focus. As Chile takes over the Chairmanship in 2012, we expect to witness another great event – that of the full establishment of the Community of Latin America and the Caribbean, the CELAC – a historic example of how we can widen the axis of support and cooperation in this region and in the hemisphere.

I have touched on all these policy matters which all lie behind the “politics of unity” that we seek so ardently to realize as part of our several foreign policy agendas here in the region. I want too to commend the Consular representatives for the role that you are playing and have played. Still, I would suggest that perhaps now is the time for an enhanced role; a more targeted engagement even as you seek to negotiate an amendment to the Vienna Convention to underline the value and role of the worldwide network of Honorary Consuls.

I would ask you in your discussions on this topic to think through how you might better contribute to the following broad areas:

- Boosting intra-Caribbean trade, fostering investment in agro-processing, and in the area of

trade in services, improving intra-regional transportation for people and goods;

- Engaging in the new growth area of cultural and sporting industries which have been identified as critical realms for Jamaica and indeed several other CARICOM states;

- Examining the changing nature of your own role both in economic and in trade diplomacy. Especially in our Caribbean region, you are called to make a new commitment to represent the Sending state on a variety of complex issues which go beyond the normal role of the Consul.

- Investing in training, particularly cross-training as a group which is critical to your success as representatives- FICAC must seek to build a tradition where Consular representatives operate more efficiently and demonstrate higher levels of service to the public and to the society at large. The more seasoned of you have a responsibility to the newer members of the fold – to give advice, to pass on the “secrets” of the power of networking, to open doors where doors and create development opportunities and to make the Consular Community a stronger, more unified voice in the wider universe of foreign policy professionals.

There is a clear purpose for your Federation, a purpose whose pursuit is even more urgent for the Caribbean region. We must strive to build in a unified way, conscious of the mantle that has been passed on to us and looking to the future that we must shape for generations yet unborn.

I thank you.

FICAC President, The Hon. Arnold Foote OJ, welcomes delegates.



President Arnold Foote addressing FICAC Caribbean Consular Conference. Also in photograph from left: Mr. Grantley Stephenson, Vice Dean of the Consular Corps of Jamaica, Hon. Dr. Kenneth Baugh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica, Mr. Antonio Alma, Chairman of the FICAC Caribbean Region, and FICAC Director Dr. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig.

Welcome to the annual FICAC Caribbean Regional meeting, and a special welcome to all delegates from overseas.
Welcome to Jamaica.

I am deeply appreciative that Hon. Dr. Kenneth Baugh, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica, has taken the time out to be our keynote speaker this morning. Thank you very much Mr. Minister.

The theme chosen for this conference; “Enhancing intra-Caribbean relations”, is a very important one. I am certain that the FICAC Caribbean Region has the

capability of making a meaningful contribution in this area.

The FICAC Caribbean region is part of the network of the World Federation of Consuls, which includes over 90 countries, and it has the full cooperation and support of the entire membership of our Federation at its disposal at all times.

The World Federation of Consuls was established in Copenhagen in October 1982 to bring together Consular Corps and Consular Associations to share experiences and co-ordinate efforts to enhance the effectiveness and status of the

Consul, the oldest institution serving international bilateral relations.

Our first President, Hon. Vagn Jespersen of Denmark, served from 1982 to 1995. Succeeding Presidents were Consul General Andreas Mavrommattis of Cyprus, 1996 – 2000, Hon. Peter Gad Naschitz of Israel, 2000 – 2003, Hon. Roland Dahlman of Sweden, 2003 – 2006.

Our Federation aims to:

- Promote and strengthen mutual understanding between Honorary Consuls and Career Consuls worldwide;

continued on page 6

- Develop a framework and basis for exchange of current information, ideas and suggestions regarding matters related to the office of Honorary Consul.
- Promote at national and international levels for a better understanding of duties and responsibilities, rights and privileges of Honorary Consuls.
- Promote at national and international levels the development of trade between the Sending and Receiving States.

The World Federation of Consuls is incorporated in Belgium by Royal Decree as a Non-Profit International Organization.

Our Federation's Permanent Secretariat is located in Brussels Belgium at 246 Avenue de Tervuren.

In 2006, when I was elected President of the World Federation of Consuls for the first time, I made a pledge to change the centres of influence of our Federation from Europe to be more inclusive towards Asia, Africa, the Americas and the Caribbean. I am pleased to say that I have kept that promise and today our Federation has organizations in every region of the world.

In keeping with this change we have formed the following FICAC Regions;

- East Asia - Chairman Hon. Vince Carlos of the Philippines.
- South Asia – Chairman Hon. Kartar Bhalla of India.
- South America – Chairman Hon. Lamartine Hollanda Jr. of Brazil.
- Central America – Chairman Hon. Eric Coufal of Mexico.
- North America - Chairman Hon. Paulina Biggs Sparkuhl of USA.
- Caribbean Chairman Hon. Antonio Alma of the Dominican Republic
- East Europe - Chairman Hon. Marko Smole of Slovenia

- South Europe - Chairman Hon. Nikolaos Margaropoulos of Greece
- West Europe - Chairman Hon. Count Niccolo Caissotti di Chiusano of Monaco
- North Europe - Chairman Hon. Aykut Eken of Turkey
- Middle East - Chairman Hon. Khaled Miqdadi of Jordan
- Western Africa - Chairman Hon. Dimitri Avraam of Ghana
- Northern Africa – Chairman Hon. Ali Benkirane of Morocco
- Southern Africa - Chairman Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio, Vice President of FICAC.

The FICAC Regions are based on the United Nations categorization.

Some of our other achievements include the following;

- The FICAC/UNICEF programme to raise funds for the benefit of underprivileged children with HIV/AIDS. The slogan for our outreach programme is; “Consuls turning caring into action”.
- Our education programme with the Centre d’Etudes Diplomatiques et Strategiques in Paris
- The FICAC Education workshops
- Our International Trade Expos and Trade Fairs which achieved huge success in several countries
- The FICAC Consular Privileges Protection Committee
- The FICAC website www.ficacworld.org
- The FICAC News publication.
- The FICAC Who's Who publication
- The World Federation of Consuls has United Nations recognition as an NGO with ECOSOC Status.
- Our Federation is also recognized as an NGO by the Organization of American States.
- The World Federation of Consuls is also recognized as an NGO at the European Union
- On 17th September 2010, the World Federation of Consuls signed a partnership agreement with

the Prince Albert II Foundation of Monaco. The Foundation, created by His Serene Highness Prince Albert II, is very active in the fields of the environment and climate change.

- The FICAC Regional Forums
- The FICAC International Cultural Galas
- Our membership programme is having excellent results. I recently attended the official inauguration of the Forum of Consuls of Bangladesh. It was a wonderful event in the presence of His Excellency, Hon. Mohammed Zillur Rahman, President of Bangladesh

We are becoming a strong source of influence worldwide and this development will allow us to perform our duties more efficiently, and in doing so, give even better service to the Sending and Receiving States.

I sincerely hope that I have given you an idea of the work of our Federation as we strive to make a meaningful contribution to the world which we inhabit together.

Thank you all very much



FICAC Caribbean Consuls to promote trade, culture and develop membership – Antonio Alma



Chairman of FICAC Caribbean Region, Mr. Antonio Alma, receiving the FICAC Medal of Appreciation from FICAC Director, Dr. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig, for his work in the Consular Corps of the Dominican Republic over the years, and his contribution to the FICAC Caribbean Region. Also in picture from left are Dom. Rep. Ambassador H.E. Jose Tomas Ares German, FICAC President Arnold Foote and Vice Chairman of the FICAC Caribbean Region, Mr. Grantley Stephenson.

We arrived here on Saturday, and my wife and I have enjoyed the excellent Jamaican hospitality for which the island is famous.

As Chairman of the FICAC Caribbean Region, I would like to thank the Consular Corps of Jamaica for hosting our Directors meeting in your beautiful country

The Caribbean Region offers a real challenge to our regional FICAC Board since twenty five countries in the area with unlimited possibilities of interaction in the commercial and cultural fields.

To reach this goal is necessary to project the work of the World Federation of Consul by

communicating on a regular basis with member countries, creating a better understanding of FICAC service and the spirit of group.

Our action plan for the coming period is to develop membership within the region in order to promote Trade Expos and cultural program in the majority of the countries of the region.

The role to be played in the Caribbean scenario by the Consular Corps and the FICAC Caribbean Regional Committee could be of capital importance in the promotion of the industrial, commercial, tourist, cultural and educational field among the Caribbean countries. We will work closely with the sending and receiving states

consular representation along with the ministry of trade and commerce of the region and the Presidency of FICAC to enhance the trade among Caribbean countries.

I want to reiterate the great honor to my person to be designated as Chairman of the Caribbean region received from the President of FICAC the Honorable Arnold Foote. I accept this honor in the name of the Consular Corp of the Dominican Republic with the compromise to do my best efforts to comply with my duties.

Thank you all very much.

“I am a true believer in the concept of Caribbean and CARICOM relations”

High Commissioner Dr. Iva Gloudon



High Commissioner of Trinidad & Tobago – Dr. Iva Gloudon receiving the FICAC Award of Appreciation from FICAC President Arnold Foote after delivering an excellent speech at the Caribbean Consular Conference held at the Pegasus Hotel on 25/7/11

High Commissioner Dr. Iva Gloudon in her address at the FICAC Caribbean Consular Conference said; It is a great honour to stand before you at this the Caribbean Regional Consular Conference. It is always good when any of our regional bodies come together with the aim of strengthening what we do as a region.

Let me allow my bias to immediately come to the

fore. I am a true believer in the concept of Caribbean and CARICOM relations. I am the quintessential Caribbean person. My international sporting background as an international field hockey athlete and my University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad & Tobago experience as the Director of Sport & Physical Education, allowed me to see Caribbean and regional unity at its best and to forever broaden

my perspective from national to regional. These experiences have also allowed me to see ourselves in the Caribbean at our worst, but these instances are far outweighed by our best. Our Caribbean region has an estimated population of forty-two (42) million. CARICOM's population is estimated at sixteen (16) million. Within these communities we have countries with populations that are less than fifty (50) thousand

and economies that are reeling from global economic situations. It is, therefore, generally agreed that our ability to operate regionally is not merely cosmetic, but it becomes a matter of survival.

And today we come together to continue to reinforce what we are doing and to seek ways for all of us in general and you Consuls in particular to enhance Intra-Caribbean relations.

Many of you are involved with trade and trade related issues and are links between the sending and receiving states. We note that several contentious trade issues seem to always arise between member states. Several of these issues occur because of a lack of transparency in the implementation of trade measures.

There is also a lack of information and communication which often results in a vacuum which then allows for speculation from the public and the media. This, therefore, calls for the strengthening of channels and mechanisms designed to ease such frictions in intra-regional trade.

Strengthening two-way communication mechanism could enhance such transparency and eliminate misunderstanding in intra-regional trading relationships. Indeed, improvement in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) regionally would also assist with many regional issues.

Increased coordination among us in the Caribbean and CARICOM on a range of issues that require a harmonized

approach such as foreign policy, finance, agriculture, tourism and trade will greatly assist and enhance our relations.

There are several other important trade issues that we can discuss, but suffice it to say that at the CARICOM level we need to implement the negotiated bilateral trade arrangements. The CARICOM-Costa Rica arrangement is one such agreement which has not received uniform support among CARICOM members. Moreover non-implementation of the obligations under trade agreements has had a negative impact on the meetings of the Joint Councils.

Permit me to say, that while my discussion so far has focused on trade, it is my belief that much of what we are trying to accomplish has failed because we seem to focus on Intra-Caribbean and CARICOM relationship at the level of Government.

It seems to me that greater emphasis must be placed on the relationships among the people of the Caribbean and CARICOM. Much of this has to come from movement of peoples around the region. And not just under the umbrella of movement to secure work in other territories.

At the beginning of this presentation I spoke about sporting and educational instances that brought persons in the region together. It is people who have to get to know each other in order to trust each other and to understand the common regional goals. Cultural exchanges and regional tourism, in all its forms, are great ways to foster positive relationships in the region.

I do not know, for instance, how many of you knew or knew about Lystra Lewis. Lystra was a national, regional and international pioneer in the sport of netball. She single handedly taught the game to schools in Trinidad & Tobago. There was a time when every primary and secondary school in Trinidad & Tobago, over six hundred schools, had at least one netball team. These teams were formed as a direct result of her initiatives including widespread national coaching courses that she led for the nation's teachers.

Lystra was also the champion organizer of national club netball and the coach of the Trinidad & Tobago team that jointly held the World title in 1979. Outside of Australia, New Zealand and England; Trinidad & Tobago is the only other country to have been World Netball Champions.

Lystra told me the story of how she encouraged the late Dr. Eric Williams, our country's first Prime Minister, to come to see a game at the Caribbean Championships held at one of our local netball courts. This was a Trinidad & Tobago game against one of the smaller Caribbean islands.

Trinidad & Tobago won this encounter by a wide margin. After the game, Dr. Williams invited Lystra to get in touch with his office to schedule a date when she would meet with him. At that meeting Dr. Williams told Lystra that it was not good enough to be constantly trouncing her Caribbean neighbours.



At the presentation with Hon. Kenneth Baugh, is United States Ambassador H.E. Pamela E. Bridgewater. Also in picture are World Federation of Consuls President, The Honourable Arnold Foote OJ and Director Dr. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig.

This was a great surprise to Lystra as with all sport, she knew that the aim was to win. So why would this eminent man be so crestfallen that our country had succeeded; had won, not just the match, but the tournament? Dr. Williams took Lystra to school on the issue of Intra Caribbean relations. He told her that she should not be so focused on beating up on a weak opponent, but instead teach the rudiments and fundamentals of the game to our Caribbean neighbours, thereby fostering keenly contested games and, more importantly, building Caribbean camaraderie and Caribbean unity.

Dr. Williams, unlike many people, proceeded to put his money

where his mouth was. He provided Lystra with the budget and all of the other necessary resources and she embarked on the task, spreading and improving the game throughout the region. Much of what we see today in Caribbean netball is as a result of her efforts. Many of the netball athletes, officials and coaches owe their competence in the game to the work of Lystra Lewis. Indeed, the current President of the World netball body, Molly Rhone, is a product of the Lystra movement.

And build Caribbean relations, through the sport of netball, Lystra did!

Earlier in this discussion I pointed out that success in

Intra Caribbean and CARICOM relation depended on increased coordination among us on a range of issues that require a harmonized approach. We saw an attempt at this during the 2007 Cricket World Cup. Regional governments and law makers came together to enact laws and procedures to enhance travel and other logistics during this international tournament which was hosted by the West Indies in several countries in the region. It is time that we address such issues for everyday movement and applications in the region.

The problems with that tournament, however, came largely because we in the Caribbean continue to be wary

of and isolated from each other. We do not understand each other. We consequently, in the case of this international cricket tournament, did not focus on our similarities nor did we essentially embrace our difference.

As a result, we had a foreign entity entice us into a global competition, come to our region and totally overshadow our sporting culture. We built stadia that were not relevant to our Caribbean culture. Most were too large for the size and economy of the countries leaving us with white elephants.

We even bought into playing surfaces that were not in sync with our weather, our water or our wealth. We were encouraged and accepted that we should deviate from our hardy, tropical grass that was suitable to our weather patterns and switched to a grass that is temperamental, difficult and expensive to maintain and needing a full time, all year round expert grounds crew.

And these grounds needed water and more water – a scarce commodity in our region. I know of this first hand as the Sport Centre at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad & Tobago acquired one of these practice grounds for the tournament. We dug a well at the table of non-chlorinated water and have the capacity to dump thirty thousand gallons of water onto the field. This is the amount of water that it takes daily, especially during the dry season and season of drought to keep that grass green. Let me not bore you with the details of the chemicals and machinery that is necessary to keep all of this going.

And as if all of this was not bad enough, we were forced to curtail our traditional music, entertainment and food that are the hallmark of Caribbean cricket. Much of this was for the sake of tourist that never came in the anticipated droves.

This all was very much in keeping with the pattern of Intra Caribbean and CARICOM relations. Those at the top are satisfied. The West Indies Cricket Board made money; but the people of the region are left wanting. Many of the small concessionaires did not generate the revenue that they were anticipating and cricket fans were not truly able to enjoy the tournament.

The lesson that I hope that we learned is that Caribbean and CARICOM relationships must be seen through the eyes of the people of the region. It is the people who will eventually cause this to happen and they cannot be left out of the equation.

A key factor to this is that greater availability of Intra-Caribbean air and maritime travel services for the people of the Caribbean and CARICOM, at affordable rates, must be seen as a priority. It cannot be that air travel to New York and Miami from Caribbean islands are cheaper than air travel between islands. This, along with the removal of travel irritants at regional borders and treatment of nationals of member states on entry at air and sea ports has to be improved.

Change may be painfully slow, but often begins with one person. We have to see ourselves as that one person who will begin the process. And often we begin this in simple ways. We need to find renewed vigour in these challenging economic times to influence governments, business and other organizations to see the value in these cultural and sporting exchanges and regional tourism as a platform for bringing the region together.



From left Dean of Consular Corp of Trinidad & Tobago, Mr. Amer Haidar. Consul for Bahamas, Dr. Monica Davis, Minister of Transport & Works Hon. L. Michael Henry, High Commissioner of Trinidad & Tobago, Dr. Iva Gloudon.



Minister of Transport and Works, Hon. Mike Henry, receives the FICAC Medal of Appreciation from FICAC Director, Dr. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig, after he delivered his keynote address at the FICAC Caribbean Consular Conference Awards Dinner. It was an excellent speech which was both interesting and informative. Also in picture are Dean of the Consular Corps of Jamaica, The Honourable Arnold Foote OJ and Vice Dean of the Consular Corps of Jamaica, Mr. Grantley Stephenson.

Money is certainly an issue. We have seen instance where programmes like Carifesta have fallen off the radar of Caribbean and CARICOM cultural exchange. That should, however, not daunt our spirits. We need to develop these exchanges on a smaller scale. Let me share an example of a situation where approximately forty (40) persons are scheduled to visit Jamaica from Trinidad & Tobago later this year.

One of their activities is aerobic exercise and aerobic dance. The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Sport & Physical Education Centre

provides expertise to lead the sessions, facilities, assistance with transportation and general expertise to this group.

The group has now decided that they want to travel overseas. We are arranging for them to come to Jamaica and along with the Mona Campus will have an array of activity planned for them which will see them visit their counterparts in Jamaica and conduct an exhibition of their aerobic skills thereby encouraging and fostering healthy lifestyle for senior citizens in Jamaica.

Intra Caribbean and CARICOM

relations at the level of the people.

While my examples have been in the area of Sport & Physical Education please understand that our attempts are not limited to these areas. The main concept is that we can use our positions and initiatives to infiltrate and infuse our region with people exchanges which will foster movement among our states and get our peoples to know each other.

We need to find renewed vigour in convincing all that this is a **MATTER OF SURVIVAL.**