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For Immediate Release

2nd Caribbean Competitiveness Forum to Feature Levi Roots

Kingston, Jamaica:

As the Caribbean continues to struggle with declining growth, finding new niches in which reside comparative and competitive advantages is the new economic imperative, and this requires exploring new methodologies. The 2nd Caribbean Competitiveness Forum, organised by the Caribbean Centre for Competitiveness, SALISES, UWI in partnership with The Caribbean Export Development Agency and the Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica (PSOJ) will be held on March 18-19th 2014 at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel, and will explore the way forward for regional competitiveness through Clusters, Global Value Chains and Innovation.

This Forum, which is being held under the theme, *A New Innings: Competitiveness through Global Value Chains, Clustering and Innovation*, promises to excite the minds of participants, debunk myths and stimulate the creative juices towards the possibilities that exist in new growth industries with increasing global growth trends.

Amongst the goodies being served is the delightful story of Levi Roots, the popular Jamaican-born, UK businessman who made the big time in 2007 when his Reggae Reggae Sauce, a delightful mix of barbecue and jerk sauce won an exclusive contract to be carried in Sainsbury's stores across Britain. Participants will hear how he embraced venture capital investment and how he continues to move his product range up the global value chain to stay competitive.

Other keynote speakers include hospitality expert Dr Clive Muir, who will present practical models of culinary tourism, specifically the *Manifesto for the Nordic Kitchen* (Denmark) and the *20,000 Thai Restaurant Abroad Project* (Thailand), and compare them to the Bahamian based *People-to-People Program* and the Jamaican based Plantation and Farm Tours.

The Logistics Hub continues to be a well anticipated development and experts will be on hand to discuss how Jamaica is preparing for the 12,500 TEU ships that will be passing through the Panama Canal come 2015.

To crown the event, regional firms, including GraceKennedy and WISYNCO will share the nuts and bolts of firm competitiveness.

This is therefore an important event for regional policy makers and practitioners in this field, and for policy makers, institutions, private sector organisations and firms engaged in charting development pathways for new productive sectors.

The Caribbean Competitiveness Forum in its second staging, promises to provide deep constructive conversation that seeks to solve the systemic challenges and determine the steps towards accelerating sustained regional competitiveness and growth. We look forward to welcoming regional and international thinkers, academics, policy makers, consultants and practitioners to this important discourse.

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