

WTO SEMINAR

June 14-15 were the days on which private and public sector leaders gathered at the Jamaica Conference Centre to discuss the operations of the WTO, the agreements which it governs and how these will affect Jamaica's trade relationship with other countries. The presentations were made by WTO's Maarten Smeets. Counsellor in that Organisation's Technical Cooperation and Training Division.

Thanks to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Foreign Trade and the Jamaica Exporters' Association for their support in organizing this important event. Another example of the public and private sectors working together for the 'good' of the nation!



SEMINAR FOR STUDENTS

The final session in this series of seminars conducted by our Research Economist Adolph Palmer, was held on June 18 at the Secretariat. It ended on a "high" with PSOJ President Peter Moses sharing with the sixth form students primarily from Holy Childhood High School and Calabar High School, with others from Kingston College and Wolmer's Boys School. His interaction with the future leaders of our country focussed on the Organisation, himself and, in response to their questions, his views on certain aspects of the economy. This interchange was well-received by the students.

TRADE POLICY MEETING

The specific objective of this meeting, was to get input from the private sector on the approach that the Jamaican government should take to the next WTO Ministerial Summit.

On June 30, the Executive Director represented the PSOJ at a special meeting of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Foreign Trade's Trade Policy Committee. The specific objective of the meeting, which was chaired by that Ministry's Minister of State, the Hon. Anthony Hylton, was to get input from the private sector on the approach that the Jamaican government should take to the next WTO Ministerial Summit. This will be held in November of this year in Seattle. The Summit is very important because it will set the direction of the WTO treaties and negotiations for the next 5-10 years. A number of our member associations and companies also participated in the meeting.

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

"Building Jamaica's Competitive Advantage" was the focus of Michael Fairbanks' presentation at the joint PSOJ/JCC Breakfast Seminar held on June 29 at the Terra Nova Hotel. A senior executive at the Monitor Company in the USA, Mr. Fairbanks shared with those present the role of members of both the public and private sectors in increasing the country's competitiveness in the global market place. He also shared his experience in working with other countries in this area. Thanks to USAID and USIS for providing this opportunity for the private sector.

Congratulations.....

Heartiest congratulations to Executive Committee Member **James Samuels** on his being re-elected President of the JHTA and for being named "Hotelier of the Year". Once again, hard-work and dedication were rewarded. The PSOJ family is proud of him!

WFDC

The Workforce Development Consortium said thanks and "bon voyage" to IDB's outgoing Resident Representative Robert Kestell who will be leaving Jamaica to take up a similar position in Guyana. Mr. Kestell was instrumental in the funding arrangements which the IDB, through its Multilateral Investment Fund, provided for financing the first years of operation of the WFDC.

What's Ahead!

July 29

PSOJ/CLAA Seminar

Venue: *Le Meridien Jamaica
Pegasus Hotel*

Topic: *Meeting the
Financing Needs of
Jamaican Businesses
in the New Millennium*

September 17

Membership Breakfast

Venue: *Terra Nova Hotel*
Speaker: *Prof. Howard Stein,
Roosevelt University, Chicago*

CUSTOMS VALUATION AGREEMENT

PSOJ Secretariat has a copy of "The WTO Customs Valuation Agreement" (Source: The Results of the Uruguay Round - World Trade Organisation) for your perusal.

This agreement was signed at the GATT Ministerial Conference in Marrakesh in April 1994 and became effective in March 1995 when Jamaica joined the WTO. However, Jamaica was among several countries which got a five-year extension in the application of this agreement. Thus after March 2000, Jamaica will be required to implement the Agreement. What are the implications? Why not read this document to find out how your business might be affected!

OTHER DOCUMENTS AT THE SECRETARIAT

The following are also available at the PSOJ Secretariat:

- Report on The Rehabilitation of Kingston Harbour (Ministry Paper No. 22/9)
- National Coordinator's Report for Jamaica - Kingston Harbour
- An Investment Plan for Kingston Harbour (Prepared by Caribbean Ecosystems Ltd. and Lawson & Associated Ltd.)

FELLOWSHIPS

Applications are being invited for the Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars Fellowships in the Humanities and Social Sciences for the period 2000-2001. Details available at the PSOJ Secretariat.