

## Trade Connections Your Link to the World

**O**n Wednesday July 14, 2004 the PSOJ Trade Policy Committee in collaboration with the Mona School of Business held the first in a series of trade-related conferences, entitled "Trade Connections: Your link to the World" as part of its mandate to educate and

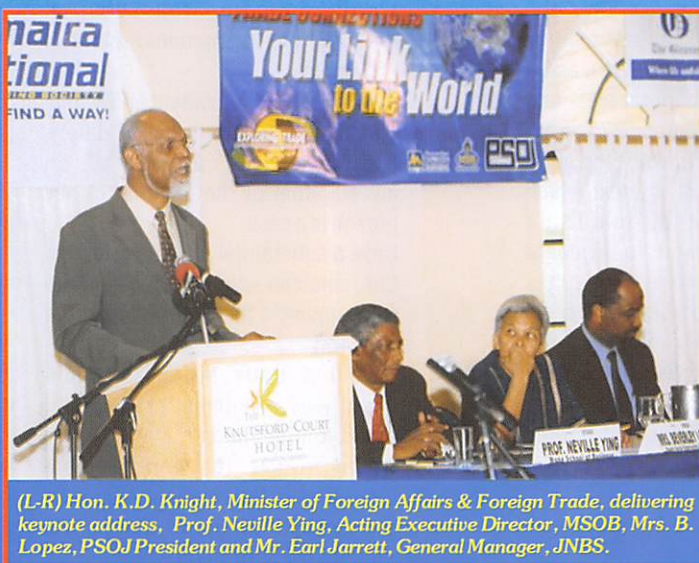
sensitise the private sector on developments in International trade. Participants and speakers from the private sector, as well as trade policy officials from Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, among others, spoke of the various negotiating arrangements the region is currently involved in, notably the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), the Regional Economic Partnership Agreements (REPAs) with Europe and various CARICOM bilaterals.

Delivering the keynote address "International Trade Negotiations: Prospects for Caribbean businesses", Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, K.D. Knight spoke of the importance of the various trade negotiations for regional businesses and the need for businesses to grasp the opportunities and overcome the challenges inherent in these negotiations. To do this, he cited the need for higher levels of "professionalism, efficiency, reliability, consistency, and creativity to produce innovative goods and services of high quality, which can carry proudly the Caribbean trademark in markets throughout the world". He encouraged businesses to bring trade to a new level by increasing their awareness of intellectual property rights, copyrights, trademarks and patents, as they seek to protect the value of their brand and products and secure utilization and protection of regional domestic capital and the development of cultural and creative industries.

The Minister spoke of non-tariff measures and their disruptive and prohibitive nature in trade and exhorted the private sector to play a more vibrant role in identifying these for the negotiations, as negotiators seek to procure greater market access for our goods. This was in keeping with one of the agenda items - market access, which was addressed by Dr. Lawson Nurse, Team Leader of the Barbados Private Sector Trade Team under the heading of "Market Access: Breaking through the barriers and penetrating markets". Other areas discussed during the conference were CARICOM bilateral arrangements, CARICOM Trade Policy, the

liberalization of trade in agriculture and the international trade in services.

Mr. Christopher Padilla, Assistant United States Trade Representative in the United States Trade Representatives (USTR) Office delivered the lunchtime address on US trade policy and its implications for companies and governments in small economies. Situating trade negotiations within the context of the present United States domestic framework, Mr. Padilla spoke of an upsurge in protectionist sentiments and the foreseeable disadvantages for small economies, likely to encounter increased U.S. trade barriers. He spoke of threats to small economies from the competitive



(L-R) Hon. K.D. Knight, Minister of Foreign Affairs & Foreign Trade, delivering keynote address, Prof. Neville Ying, Acting Executive Director, MSOB, Mrs. B. Lopez, PSOJ President and Mr. Earl Jarrett, General Manager, JNBS.

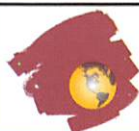
challenge likely to be posed by larger players, albeit developing, such as China and India who are geared towards securing a larger market share with increased liberalization.

Having concluded a successful conference, the PSOJ and the MSB, together, hope to feed the conclusions and recommendations into the policy process; provide the means for rigorous research and analysis to support the various negotiations and assist firms to transition to a more competitive environment; and establish a mechanism to refine them and develop the doable ones into policy and actions.

Among the sponsors of the event were Jamaica National Building Society, Caribbean Cement Company Limited, the Bank of Nova Scotia (Ja.) Ltd., Continental Baking Company, Radio Mona, The Gleaner Company and MAPCO Business Printers.

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## Jamaica's Access to Information Act 2002

**J**amaica's Access to Information Act was passed in July 2002 and came into effect January 5, 2004. The Act aims to ensure: Government openness, accountability and transparency in decision making; a mechanism for public participation in governance decisions; increased knowledge by the public of the functions of Government agencies and Ministries. The Act gives the public the right to official documents held by Government and thus enables access to, and a better understanding of the processes and practices of governance in a democracy. The Act will particularly enable the private sector to have access to documents of interest which previously were restricted, including documents enabling a person to evaluate housing and infrastructure projects, understand procurement processes and bids, the justification for price increases, the imposition of new standards and safety requirements, obtain information on the waste of, or saving of scarce resources and priority setting in spending.

### Facts about Jamaica's Access to Information Act

The Act is being implemented on a phased basis in Jamaica and both phase I and II Agencies/Ministries have already been brought under the Act and they include:

- " Office of the Prime Minister
- " The Office of the Cabinet
- " The Ministry of Finance and Planning
- " The Ministry of Local Government, Community development and sport
- " Jamaica Information Service
- " National Works Agency
- " Ministry of Agriculture
- " Ministry of Commerce, Science and Technology
- " Ministry of Education
- " Ministry of Youth and Culture
- " Ministry of Health
- " Ministry of Water And Housing
- " Accountant General's Department
- " Bank of Jamaica
- " Urban Development Corporation

The Act gives the public an enforceable right to

have access to information held by Government, subject to limited qualified exemptions. The exemptions in the Jamaican law are limited in scope under broad categories. Some of the exemptions are mentioned below and include official documents which:

- " Would prejudice the security, defense, and international relations of Jamaica
- " Relate to law enforcement and would endanger a person's life or safety, prejudice the conduct of an investigation or the fair trial of any person in a case
- " Have a substantial adverse effect on the Jamaican economy or affect the Government's ability to manage the economy
- " Reveal a trade secret or would destroy or diminish commercial valuable information
- " Would involve the unreasonable disclosure of information relating to the personal affairs of any person whether living or dead.

Any denial of access to a document may be appealed to an Independent Appeals Tribunal set up under the Act.

### The Carter Center's Project In Jamaica.

The Carter Center has begun a two-year Access to Information Project in Jamaica to focus on collaboration and support of public awareness, implementation and enforcement efforts related to the Jamaica's Access to information Act 2002.

### The Need for Access to Information

In The Carter Center's 2003 publication "Access to Information: A Key to Democracy", the need for Access to Information has been described as follows: -

"Democracy depends on a knowledgeable citizenry whose access to a range of information enables them to participate fully

in public life, help determine priorities for public spending, receive equal access to justice, and to hold their public officials accountable. Inadequate public access to information allows corruption to flourish undetected and unpunished. Secrecy allows back-room deals to determine spending in the interests of the few rather than the many.

It also prevents citizens from assessing the decisions of their leaders. Access, however, must be balanced with a protection of personal privacy and narrowly defined state interests".

There is a shared responsibility between government and civil society to ensure that the new information regime thrives. Government must establish proper processes for imparting information, while citizens have the responsibility to request information. If people are not using the new law, it will atrophy and no longer meet its greater potential.

As we have seen throughout the world, effective implementation and enforcement of the Act will only be achieved if members of the public, civil society, the private sector, and media associations use the Act, make requests for information, pursue appeals before the Appeals Tribunal and Court and support public educational activities.

It is hoped that Jamaica will serve as a model country in seeking openness, democracy and transparency. The challenge will be for Jamaica's private sector to make use of this valuable tool to ensure fair, transparent and effective business practices in Jamaica today.

### Where to find additional information on Access to Information in Jamaica?

Carter Center Website:  
[www.cartercenter.com](http://www.cartercenter.com)

Access to Information Unit Website:  
[www.jis.gov.jm](http://www.jis.gov.jm)

Carter Center Field Officer  
2004



## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

### PSOJ RECEIVES US\$2M



On Monday, 21st June, 2004 NCB Group Managing Director, Mr. Aubyn Hill, presented PSOJ President, Mrs. Beverley Lopez with NCB's donation of US\$2M to the consolidation of the private sector associations.

### 5<sup>th</sup> BUSINESS FORUM OF THE GREATER CARIBBEAN

The Association of Caribbean States (ACS), in collaboration with the Centre of Exports and Investment of the Dominican Republic, presents its 5th Business Forum of the Greater Caribbean, 26-28 October, 2004 in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. The purpose of this annual forum is to promote trade and enhance regional market cooperation, through the coordination of business meetings and consultations for regional exporters and importers.

This forum will provide regional entrepreneurs with an excellent opportunity to interact and discuss trade opportunities with other firms in the Greater Caribbean region, particularly the non-English speaking markets of Cuba, Colombia, Venezuela and the Dominican Republic. Over the last few years, there has been little representation from Jamaican entrepreneurs at these meetings. We encourage you to rectify this, particularly as we strive to maximize on returns and promote trade opportunities with our Latin American neighbours with which we already have formal trade agreements. For further information, please consult the ACS website at <http://www.acs-aec.org> or email [forum@acs-aec.org](mailto:forum@acs-aec.org).

### JOB CREATION AWARDS AUGUST 2004



#### JULY:

NCB Capital Markets,  
Guardsman Armoured Ltd.,  
BCIC (ASSIST Care Centre)  
Grace, Kennedy & Company Ltd.

#### AUGUST:

Capital & Credit Financial Group  
Garbage Disposal & Sanitation Systems  
Starfish Oils  
The Gleaner Company

Members who are interested in placing strip advertisement ( 2.5 cm x 19 cm) in our PSOJ NEWS are invited to do so by contacting Tanya Pringle or Karen Payton at....

**Tel: (876) 927-6238. Extensions: 2244 OR 2247**



## Bulletin Board



### PSOJ HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE 2004

The PSOJ inducted Mr. Douglas Orane, CD, Chairman and CEO, Grace, Kennedy and Company Limited at a Banquet held in his honour, on Thursday, 30th September, 2004 at the Grand Ballroom of the Hilton Kingston Hotel.

Mr. Orane, a past student of Wolmer's Boys School, attended Glasgow University and Harvard Business School. He is a past president of the PSOJ and served for two terms (1992-1994). During his tenure as President, he gained national attention for his views on topical issues, particularly on electoral reform. Mr. Orane served as an Independent Senator for the years 1998 to 2003. During that time, he chaired the Select committee on the Companies Act, which led to the significant modernization of the Bill, passed by Parliament this year. He also chaired the Committee appointed to reduce waste in the Government sector, which produced a final document, popularly known as the 'Orane Report', whose recommendations caught the imagination of the Jamaican public.

As a corporate leader Douglas Orane has made outstanding contributions to the society through channels such as the Grace & Staff Community Development Foundation and the Grace, Kennedy Jamaican Birthright Programme. Additionally, he has been the Patron of Child Month since 1999. In August 2002, he was awarded the Order of Distinction in the rank of Commander for his contribution to commerce and the private sector.

In appreciation of his rich contribution, the PSOJ salutes Douglas Orane, CD and welcomes him proudly to its Hall of Fame.



### Welcome

The PSOJ welcomes Lola Fong Wright to the position of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the PSOJ.

She has worked with Citibank for nineteen years in human resources, training, marketing technology, and most recently as Vice President - Cash Management, Trade and Treasury Services. Prior to joining Citibank, she worked as a Management Consultant in the field of human resources and training. Her experience and training in management and human resources should prove helpful in assisting the PSOJ to maximize human resource efficiencies and achieve high quality, performance and service standards, while finalizing the consolidation process. Mrs. Fong Wright is no stranger to the PSOJ as she has worked as the Project Manager on the PSOJ consolidation project since July 2004.

A graduate of the University of the West Indies in 1979 with a B.Sc. in Sociology, she gained her Masters in Business Administration (MBA) in 2001 from the Florida International University (FIU). Mrs. Fong Wright was awarded 'Outstanding Speaker of the 20th Century' by the International Biographical Center - Cambridge, England and was also selected as 'Best Presenter' by peers in the FIU MBA programme.

To outgoing CEO, Greta Bogues, thank you for your contribution over the past three years and our sincere best wishes for all your future endeavours.