

**A n n u a l R e p o r t**

**2001**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

*To formulate and advocate a coherent and effective trade policy that will advance Guyana's multilateral, regional and bilateral trading interests; identify opportunities for developing new markets for existing goods and services and new exportable goods and services; and combine conventional and other approaches to the critical issue of resource mobilization through technical cooperation with the developing countries and the donor community of the industrialized states, multilateral financial and development-oriented institutions.*

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Immediately following the 2001 General elections in March, the Government took a number of critical steps to strengthen public sector institutional arrangements for the trade and economic cooperation sectors. One such initiative was the establishment of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation.

In the area of **trade**, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation is responsible for the formulation and advocacy of a coherent and effective trade policy, a principal objective of which will be to advance Guyana's multilateral, regional and bilateral trading interests. In the area of **international cooperation**, the Ministry is responsible for the mobilization of resources through technical cooperation with the international donor community.

Against the foregoing background, the Ministry adopted the following Mission Statement:

*"To formulate and advocate a coherent and effective trade policy that will advance Guyana's multilateral, regional and bilateral trading interests; identify opportunities for developing new markets for existing goods and services and new exportable goods and services; and combine conventional and other approaches to the critical issues of resource mobilization through technical cooperation with the developing countries and the donor community of the industrialized states, multilateral financial and development-oriented institutions".*

Arising out of the Mission Statement the following key objectives were established for the Ministry:

## Key Objectives

- Implementation of a coherent and effective national trade policy;
- Informed decision-making, enhanced participation and input by Guyana in the various external trade negotiations;
- Improved conditions for Guyana's trade and investment opportunities within the CARICOM and the wider international community;
- Increased mobilization of resources for technical and other economic assistance from multilateral and bilateral sources;
- Increased resource flows for capacity building, employment generation, poverty alleviation and institutional strengthening;
- Increased consultations with and information flows to stakeholders regarding Guyana's international trade policy initiatives and international economic cooperation arrangements.



## Trade Policy

Foreign Trade is a core activity of the Guyana economy, and the steps that are required to support and propel its further development are far reaching and diverse. A coherent and effective trade policy will, therefore, be crucial to advancing, over the next decade, Guyana's efforts to increase exports beyond the current level, and diversify the economy away from its historical dependence on the exports of primary commodities.

Following its establishment, the new Ministry was immediately engaged in a number of critical activities, such as the ACP Special Ministerial Conference on Sugar, which was hosted by the Government of Guyana in April 2001; the 73<sup>rd</sup> ACP Council of Ministers Meeting, and the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) in May 2001; and the Special Meeting of COTED, as well as the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on External Negotiations, held in June 2001 to treat with the various external trade negotiations facing the Caribbean Community. The Ministry also represented Guyana at the 6<sup>th</sup> FTAA Ministerial meeting in April 2001 and the 4<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference in November 2001.

The Ministry has had to hit the ground running, so to speak, on a number of sectoral matters also, such as our rice trade with CARICOM, the importation of cement for the local market, etc. Discussions were also held with a number of companies with export interest, such as Caribbean Containers Ltd. (CCL), Sterling Products, and IDS Holdings.

Our trade policy, therefore, is being geared to:

- Support local industry to take advantage of opportunities arising from international economic trends, including the identification and removal of barriers to trade;
- Promote trade and investment opportunities for Guyana, through bilateral activities;
- Overcome market barriers facing export of goods and services, through negotiations with other Governments, and through active participation in the World Trade Organization, and in regional bodies, such as CARICOM;
- Utilize the rules and procedures of the WTO to protect and pursue Guyana's foreign trade interests;
- Provide the Guyanese community, at home and abroad, with comprehensive, relevant and up-to-date information on Guyana's foreign trade policy, and related developments.

## International Cooperation

The Department of International Cooperation was established as one of two technical departments, the other being the Foreign Trade Department, in the Ministry in June 2001. The Department's mandate is to mobilize resources in support of national development objectives, through the promotion of technical and economic cooperation with the international donor community.

At the outset, it was agreed that the Department would concentrate heavily on existing bilateral economic partners,

including Brazil, China, Cuba, India, Japan and South Korea, for technical, financial and human resources under the aegis of Joint Commissions and similar mechanisms. Cooperation programmes with Colombia, Mexico, Venezuela and Member States of the Caribbean Community have also been intensified. The Department also functions as the central coordinating agency or focal point for bilateral economic cooperation programmes with regional organizations, such as ECLAC/CDDCC, OAS, SELA, IOM, VSO, Peace Corps, and EU/LAC. Immediately following its establishment, however, the Department had to set about its goals with minimum staff in place. Some members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were seconded for a limited duration. Subsequent recruitment introduced a number of new staff members to the Department.

## **General Administration**

By the time of the Ministry's establishment in April, the 2001 Budget process was well advanced and, due to other pressing national priorities, the Cabinet decided that the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation would, for the remainder of 2001, operate within the budgeted programme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This allowed the new Ministry, however, some breathing space to sort out, in as seamless a manner as possible, some critical arrangements pertaining to staffing, accommodation, budget, etc. in time for the new fiscal period in 2002. In the meanwhile, the Ministry continued to be housed at Takuba Lodge, and shared services with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## **Staffing**

Initial steps were taken during the year with respect to staffing. The requisite technical personnel were recruited from among persons already handling matters pertinent to the new ministry, and who were employed in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the former Trade Ministry. In addition, some personnel were recruited through public advertisement.

John Isaacs  
Permanent Secretary  
Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation



# KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2001

## FOREIGN TRADE

### A. MULTILATERAL TRADE RELATIONS

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#### Objective

*Monitor, analyze and act on developments in the multilateral trading system to advance trading and economic interests.*

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#### I. Seminars/Retreats/Workshops

The Ministry, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and the CRNM, organized a national Stakeholders' Retreat on the External Negotiations on Trade in Agriculture on August 17. The Retreat focused on the external negotiations in agriculture in the three main negotiating theatres the WTO, the FTAA and the ACP-EU Cotonou Agreement and mainly sought to identify the key issues for Guyana in an effort to outline a negotiating strategy.

Similarly, a National Stakeholders' Retreat on the External Negotiations on Trade in Services, organized by the Ministry, with technical support from the CRNM, was held on November 21. The Retreat sought to identify the key issues for Guyana in the external negotiations, and the national priorities in the development of the domestic services sector.

#### II. World Trade Organization (WTO)

The Ministry prepared for and participated in the 4<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference, held in Doha, Qatar, during the month of November 2001. Guyana made substantive submissions in the areas of market access and domestic support, in relation to the Agriculture negotiations.

Guyana attended a Caribbean/WTO Ministerial Trade Conference in Montego Bay, Jamaica in early July 2001. That Conference, which was attended by the WTO Director-General, Mr. Mike Moore, was part of CARICOM's intense preparations for and involvement in the WTO multilateral negotiations. Immediately following the Conference, CARICOM Trade Ministers met with the IDB President, Mr. Enrique Iglesias, at the same venue, to discuss possible technical and financial assistance by the IDB to the smaller economies in the FTAA process.

With respect to the subject of a new round of negotiations, Guyana supported the CARICOM position that the region was "not unalterably opposed to such a round, but remained unconvinced of the case for the launching of a new round of multilateral trade negotiations, before the problems of the implementation of the Uruguay Round Agreements and Decisions, raised by developing countries, are satisfactorily addressed and resolved".

### **III. ACP-EU Matters**

The ACP Special Ministerial Conference on sugar was hosted by the Government of Guyana, during April 24-27, 2001. One of the main outcomes of the meeting was the establishment of the ACP's work plan, and negotiating guidelines for the renewal of the SPS and Sugar Protocol.

At the aforementioned Sugar Conference in Georgetown, Guyana made the recommendation to negotiate an increase in the guaranteed price of sugar as a compensatory measure, as a result of the impact of the EU's Everything But Arms initiative (EBA) on Sugar, under the SPS Agreement.

### **IV. Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA)**

The Ministry represented Guyana at the 6<sup>th</sup> Ministerial meeting of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) in Buenos Aires, Argentina in April 2001. Current negotiations for the establishment of a hemisphere-wide Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) are well advanced, and the Heads of State of the hemisphere at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Summit of the Americas in April 2001, set January 1, 2005 for the negotiations to conclude, and December 31<sup>st</sup> of that year for the implementation of the Agreement. The negotiators in the nine negotiating groups were mandated to develop, over the following eighteen months, consolidated texts in the respective thematic areas, such as agriculture, market access, investment, and importantly for Guyana and CARICOM, the treatment and integration of the smaller economies. In the context of CARICOM's joint approach to the negotiations, Guyana committed itself to be actively involved in the Negotiating Groups on Agriculture, Market Access, and Investment, the Consultative Group on Smaller Economies (CGSE) and the oversight Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC).



## **B. REGIONAL TRADE ARRANGEMENTS**

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### **Objective**

*To support regional trading arrangements and the implementation of the CSME.*

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### **I. Implementation of the CSME**

During August 2001, the Ministry convened a one-day special retreat to treat with matters pertaining to the CARICOM Single Market to Economy (CSME), with special emphasis on Protocol II (Free Movement of Persons, Rights of Establishment)

In October 2001, Guyana's draft Proposal for the "Removal of Restrictions Inconsistent with Protocol II" was submitted to the Cabinet for consideration. Subsequent to modifications, and at Cabinet's request, the modified drafts were re-submitted in November and December 2001. The draft of December 2001 was accepted by Cabinet, and submitted to the CARICOM Secretariat on December 31, 2001.

### **II. CARICOM/Colombia Trade Agreement**

In response to the Cabinet, the Ministry conducted a 'Revenue Impact Assessment' to gauge the impact of the duty-free entry of products from Colombia, on the Guyanese economy. The results of the assessment were reported to the Cabinet, following which approval was granted for Guyana's ratification and implementation of the Agreement. The Agreement will be implemented in early 2002.

### **III. CARICOM/Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement**

This Agreement was provisionally implemented in all CARICOM Member States in December 2001, with the exception of Guyana and Suriname. In the case of Guyana, the Cabinet requested more details regarding the potential impact of the agreement on Guyana. The Ministry will conduct further assessments in 2002.

## **C. BILATERAL TRADE RELATIONS**

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### **Objective**

*To formulate and implement appropriate arrangements to enhance Guyana's trade with traditional and non-traditional markets.*

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### **I. Guyana-Brazil Partial Scope Agreement**

In June 2001, Guyana and Brazil negotiated a Bilateral Trade Agreement entitled 'Partial Scope Agreement between the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Cooperative Republic of Guyana'. The Agreement seeks to foster greater bilateral trade flows through the reciprocal granting of tariff preferences by the parties on specified Lists of Products.

### **II. Guyana-China Trade Agreement**

Guyana and China signed a Trade Agreement on September 17, 2001, which has as its principal objective the provision of Most-favoured Nation (MFN) Treatment with regard to customs duties and related charges, import and export regulations and other administrative formalities. Without the Agreement, the importation of Guyanese goods into China was subject to a general tariff. With the Agreement in force, China will offer a preferential tariff (MFN). Guyana's exports of seafood, timber, plywood and rum, in particular, stand to benefit.

## **D. INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND TRADE FACILITATION**

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### **Objective**

*To support local industry and business development through the identification and removal of barriers to trade.*

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### **I. Suspension of the Common External Tariff (CET)**

During the year, the Ministry took prompt action to avert a potential cement shortage in Guyana by securing a suspension of the CET to facilitate imports of cement from extra-regional sources. The Ministry held a number of consultations with Trinidad Cement Limited (the regional supplier), and the local cement importers, in an effort to regularize the situation.

## **II. Support to the Rice Industry**

At the 11<sup>th</sup> COTED meeting in June 2001, Guyana presented a proposal to the meeting for the re-insertion of paddy on the List of Items Ineligible for Duty-free Treatment. Paddy was inadvertently omitted from the List by the CARICOM Secretariat, previously. Jamaica had raised concerns about its inability to support the proposal without qualification in light of investment decisions undertaken by the Jamaican government, at the national level. COTED recommended that Guyana and Jamaica have bilateral discussions on the matter and report to the subsequent meeting of the COTED.

## **III. National Trade Promotion Committee**

In August 2001, a meeting of a National Trade Promotion Committee was convened to look at the development of a national export strategy. The initial focus was on four sub-sectors, namely, processed and fresh foods and pharmaceuticals, forestry and wood products, crafts and Jewellery, garments, and leather products. The Chairpersons of the sub-sectoral Working Groups were mandated to commence the technical work to advance the process.

## **IV. Forestry Sector**

In August 2001, the Ministry convened a meeting with the Forest Products Association, and key processors and exporters of wood and wood products. Among the issues discussed were the slumps in the international markets, and the need to promote Guyana's local species of hardwood in the overseas markets. Site visits to millers, processors and exporters were undertaken in the Essequibo region. A number of diplomats accompanied the Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation on the visit. This allowed for interaction and discussions on marketing and investment possibilities.

## **V. Coconut Oil Industry**

In promoting inter-agency co-operation among producers and exporters, this Ministry facilitated discussions with the Pomeroon Oil Mill, Demerara Shipping Company, and Sterling Products Limited, in August 2001, in an attempt to assist the former company to secure bulk shipping containers for the shipment of bulk coconut oil to Jamaica.



#### **IV. Other Meetings**

A number of other meetings were held with key exporters, cottage industry operators, and shipping agencies. These meetings focused on the need for inter-agency cooperation in the production and marketing of quality Guyanese products overseas. Exporters were encouraged to establish a vibrant 'Exporters Association' which could be an effective lobbying body on their behalf.

#### **VII. Electronic Village**

The Ministry shared information on Guyana's imports of electrical and electronic items with Chinese officials, who expressed China's interest in establishing an "Electronic Village" at one of the Industrial Estates.

### **INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

#### **A. BILATERAL COOPERATION**

##### **I. Brazil**

Guyana and Brazil enjoyed a fruitful relationship in bilateral technical cooperation programs, during the year 2001. It saw the promotion and coordination of technical cooperation with Brazil.

- The Ministry of Fisheries, Crops and Livestock, through the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI), hosted a Brazilian team from the Brazilian Agricultural Research Agency (EMBRAPA), during the period August 13-19, 2001. The objective of this mission was to initiate discussions with agencies with specific interest in the development of the agriculture sector, especially those that have already established links with Guyana.
- Consultations were convened to continue negotiations for direct financing from Europe for the Guyana/Brazil Road Project. Due to sensitive issues in this regard, emphasis was placed on a Rupununi Development Project that focuses on measures to ameliorate the socio-economic impact of the road on surrounding inhabitants.

- Guyana mustered efforts at establishing a viable Guyana Shield Project with Brazil. A consultant from CARIFORUM visited Guyana to hold internal meetings to propel the initiative, and to further submit a proposal to the European Commission for their consideration.
- Bilateral relations between Guyana and Brazil were strengthened with the launching of the Guyana/Brazil Trade Agreement on August 09, 2001.
- Guyana also saw the project formulation seminar of the Brazilian Agency for Cooperation (ABC), during the period September 3-7, 2001. The main objective of the seminar was to enable participants of the Caribbean Community Member States to understand the systems and procedures for assessing technical assistance from the Federative Republic of Brazil.
- Consultations between National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) and the Brazilian Agricultural Research Agency (EMBRAPA) were convened with a view to formulating two priority projects, which are to be appended to the Memorandum of Understanding agreed on by both parties. These meetings were productive, allowing for the inclusion of the following projects:
  - The Production and Utilization of Tropical Fruits
  - Appropriate Technology for the Intermediate Savannahs
- The basic Agreement on Technology and Scientific Cooperation between the Government of Guyana and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil is pivotal to effective implementation, since Guyana stands to gain enormous advantages in the agricultural sector.

## II. **Mexico**

During 2001, the Department of International Cooperation continued to monitor initiatives to maintain close relations between Guyana and Mexico.

The Ministry of Economy of Mexico received three (3) Guyanese experts during the period September 24-28, 2001, to participate in strengthening Cultural Development Programmes in Guyana.

## III. **Cuba**

The Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation has been engaged in coordinating and facilitating the implementation of technical cooperation programmes and agreements under the Joint Commission with Cuba, during the year 2001.

- The Government of Cuba offered three scholarships for the International School of Physical Education and Sports in Cuba to the Government of Guyana. Guyana's participation was facilitated by the Department of International Cooperation.
- Guyana also attended the Twenty-First Session of the Guyana/Cuba Joint Commission, which was held in Havana, Cuba, during the period November 26-28, 2001. Inter-agency consultations were convened with public and private sector representatives in an effort to influence the agenda and content of the new work programme for adoption at the Joint Commission.
- Coinciding with the Joint Commission was the Nineteenth Havana International Fair at which a Guyanese delegation benefited from a first hand view of the annual activity encouraging participation in future events. Representatives of the private sector took the opportunity, while in Havana, to meet with counterparts from the Chamber of Commerce and the Manufacturers' Association of Cuba with a view to identifying markets for their products, as well as product which could be exported to Cuba.

#### **IV. Venezuela**

The year under review has witnessed continued bilateral relations between Guyana and Venezuela.

- Following the Venezuela/Brazil energy link from the GURI Hydroelectric Dam, inter-agency consultations were convened to assess the feasibility as well as the economic and political implications of the avenues extended for wheeling energy originating from the GURI dam to the national grid. Mindful of the energy needs of Guyana, sourcing energy from GURI was seen as feasible, since Guyana's energy needs would be adequately addressed.
- The Department also facilitated and monitored the signing of an agreement on energy cooperation with Venezuela. Full powers were given to the Minister of Finance to proceed with the signing of the Caracas Energy Accord. This agreement was signed on December 01, 2001.

#### **V. India**

Guyana and India have enjoyed fruitful and productive relations, since the advent of its technical cooperation programmes and the Guyana/ India Joint Commission.

The Department facilitated the participation of a Guyanese official in the diploma course in Development Journalism for Non-Aligned and developing countries from August 06-November 31, 2001, at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi, India.



Guyana also benefited from training opportunities offered by India through the Commonwealth scholarship scheme 2001-2002 in computer science studies. This department facilitated Guyana's participation.

The department also facilitated a request by IPED for the deputation of a financial consultant with experience in development banking under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme.

The Department was tasked with facilitating the application for an ITEC Expert for deputization in Guyana on a two-year stint. The ITEC expert selected for deputation worked in the field of crop planning/forecasting at the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI). Likewise, ITEC application forms were submitted for experts in the fields of ceramics, welding, leather craft and archaeology.

Guyana/India bilateral cooperation has seen a significant increase in the different areas of cooperation. In the area of technical training, Guyana has benefited from a number of training offers extended to Guyanese in the field of agriculture and science. Sixteen Guyanese nationals have undergone training in various institutions in India during the year under review.

#### **IV. China**

Guyana and China have shared fruitful and productive relations since the establishment of diplomatic ties. Over the past year this relationship has been revamped and enhanced.

The successes of cooperation between the two countries are channeled through the Guyana/China Bilateral Economic and Technical Cooperation Programmes, which are conceived through the Guyana/China Joint Commission.

- In July 2001, an invitation was granted by the Government of Guyana for the General Manager of Mount Tai Overseas Foundation Incorporated of China to continue operations at the clay brick factory.
- A four-member delegation of the Jiangsu Province Department of Health of the People's Republic of China visited Guyana during August 2001. The Government of Guyana saw this as a unique opportunity for officials of the health sector to hold discussions on issues of mutual interest. Discussions were centered on future cooperation initiatives under the Guyana/China Medical Cooperation Programme.

- A number of Guyanese officials participated in Chinese TCDC courses for 2001. The agriculture and fisheries sectors were the main beneficiaries of the training.
- An Agreement of Lease of Land, Building and Equipment was concluded between China Textiles and Industrial Cooperation for Foreign Economic and Technical Cooperation (CTEXIC) and Sanata Textiles Limited in 1997. As a follow-up, CTEXIC dispatched one Chinese engineer to Guyana to participate in the leasing project in August 2001 for three years. The seventh batch of two Chinese technical personnel arrived in Guyana to participate in the implementation of the leasing project during the period September-November 2001.
- On September 17, 2001, the Government of Guyana and the People's Republic of China concluded a Trade Agreement. The Agreement is expected to encourage an increase in Guyana's exports to China due to preferential tariff access.
- The second PECC International Trade and Investment Fair was convened during the period November 6-10, 2001, in Tianjin, China. The International Wine and Spirit Trade Fair 2001, was also convened in Zhuhai, China, during the period December 5-9, 2001.
- A four-member delegation from the Foreign Preferential Loan Department of Import/Export Bank of China (China EXIM Bank) visited Guyana to assess and review the four interest- subsidized preferential credit projects. The delegation arrived mid-September for a period of five days, and paid a courtesy call on the Honourable Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation. Another Chinese delegation, led by the Board Chairman of the Jinan Huachen Industrial Company Limited from the Shandong Province, visited Guyana to explore the possible avenues for importing Guyanese products into China, and to survey the investment opportunities in the plastic, construction material and agriculture business sector. The eight-member business delegation visited for seven days.
- Following the implementation of an Agreement between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Guyana on the Provision of an Interest-Subsidized Preferential Credit by China to Guyana, and a Memorandum of Understanding on an Interest-Subsidized Preferential Credit provided by the People's Republic of China to the Republic of Guyana, a five member delegation from the Fuzhou Jin Sha, visited in November 2001 for consultations and to carry out the necessary feasibility study.



## **VII. Japan**

The relationship between Guyana and Japan is a dominant area of focus for cooperation between the two countries. The year under review saw tremendous progress in the various facets of cooperation.

- In July 2001, a Japanese team visited Guyana to perform a feasibility study on the proposed site for the New Amsterdam Hospital project. The team, however, expressed dissatisfaction over the location of the proposed site. This stalled the progress of this project for some time.
- The Department facilitated requests on behalf of the Government of Guyana for the donation of office equipment and supplies from the Government of Japan. The Department also facilitated the application for Japanese grant aid for the fiscal year 2002. The Essequibo Coast Water project was revised and resubmitted. However, the request was rejected due to the "dispute" over the Essequibo region.
- The Department of International Cooperation facilitated the implementation of the Japanese Non-Project Grant Aid of US\$4.2M towards the construction of the CARICOM Secretariat Headquarters. The Exchange of Notes for the implementation of this project was signed during the new Japanese Ambassador's accreditation in September 2001. Several private sector companies applied for and received products under Japanese Non-Project Grant Aid. The funds from the procurement of products would be made available for utilization in the construction process.

## **VIII. Republic of Korea**

Up until the year under review, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation continued to monitor cooperation initiatives and strengthen bilateral ties between the Governments of Guyana and the Republic of Korea.

- In May 2001, the Government of the Republic of Korea dispatched a mission to Guyana to lobby for its candidature to host World Expo 2010. Following this visit, an invitation was extended to the Korean Government for a trade delegation to visit Guyana.
- In 2001, the Department of International Cooperation facilitated the application for Korean Grant Aid for 2001. The Ministry received computers and office equipment under the Korean Grant Aid Programme.



## **IX. United States of America**

The Government of Guyana and the Government of the United States of America signed an Amendment to the Democracy and Governance Programme to the tune of US\$1.79M. The signing took place on August 15, 2001.

## **B. MULTILATERAL COOPERATION**

### **I. Intellectual Property Rights**

- The Department of International Cooperation facilitated the participation of a Guyanese official at the WIPO/USPTO Academy in the Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights, held in Arlington, Virginia, USA, during the period October 22-26, 2001. Chief Justice Carl Singh represented Guyana.
- The International Seminar on the role of “Intellectual Property Protection in the Field of Bio-diversity and Traditional Knowledge” held in Manaus, Brazil from September 09-11, 2001 was attended by Her Excellency Cheryl Miles, Guyana's Ambassador to Brazil, and Ms. An Yin of the Department of International Cooperation. The seminar provided officials responsible for intellectual property issues with knowledge and up to date developments in the fields of patenting of life forms, the relationship between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the TRIPS Agreement, the protection of traditional knowledge, the protection of plant varieties, and farmers' rights.

### **II. LATIN AMERICA ECONOMIC SYSTEM (SELA)**

- Following the opening of the new SELA headquarters, an international seminar under the theme “Latin America and Caribbean Integration - A Necessary and Possible Task” was held over the period July 25-26, 2001. The Guyana mission in Caracas represented Guyana at that seminar.
- On September 17-18, 2001, SELA convened a seminar on FTAA “Challenges and Perspectives for Latin America and the Caribbean” in collaboration with the Center for Advanced Multidisciplinary Studies, Brazilian University. The Guyana Mission was also requested to represent Guyana at this activity.

### III. ACP-EU

The highlight of the review year activities was the visit of the Secretary-General of the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group Secretariat, Mr. Jean Robert Goulongana, on July 26-28, 2001. The main focus of the visit was to hold discussions with high-level Government officials, as well as those of the Caribbean Community Secretariat. The discussions concentrated on issues of global and hemispheric concerns, in particular the participation of small economies in the Free Trade Areas of the Americas (FTAA). Consultations were also held to determine Guyana's future on ACP-EU relations, and post-Cotonou negotiations, in general.

Guyana's current economic situation and the territorial controversies with Suriname and Venezuela were also subjects of discussions.

During the Secretary-General's visit, a courtesy call was paid to His Excellency President Bharrat Jagdeo, and other senior Government officials and private sector representatives.

### IV. Commonwealth Secretariat

The Republic of Guyana and the Commonwealth Secretariat have enjoyed fruitful relations *via*. project assistance to foster national development. The Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation, in consultation with other Ministries, proposed a number of areas for technical assistance from the Commonwealth Secretariat, during a visit by Ms. Tendai Bare, Director of General Technical Assistance Services Division, August 2001.

The following project proposals outlined in order of priority:

- Marketing Specialist
- Expert on Trade in Agriculture
- Legal Draughtsman
- International Trade Policy expert
- Custom and Tariffs Specialist
- Expert in Project Evaluation
- Geographic System Specialist
- Vegetable Agronomist
- Social Economist

Consultations are ongoing with the beneficiary Ministries and other Government Agencies to propel the rate of implementation of these projects for technical assistance.

## **V. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**

The Ministry of Health benefited from the services of Mr. Ronald G. Warton, a specialist in the field of rehabilitative services, during the period August 13 - 21, 2001.

A proposal was made to continue the consultancy project in November 2001 and August 2002. This department was tasked with facilitating the visit of Mr. Warton.