

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

2002

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Considering that the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation was established in April 2001, the 2002 Programme year would have provided the new Ministry with the first real opportunity, since its establishment, to review its operations and strategize on its future mission.

In 2002, the Ministry managed to keep faithful to the mission, which the government has set in the area of foreign trade and international cooperation, bearing in mind the very limited institutional resources, both human and financial, with which the Ministry has had to work.

A major preoccupation of the Ministry during the year was the need to effectively coordinate the input and participation of the many relevant stakeholders in the development of national trade policy initiatives and international cooperation projects.

Trade developments

Developing New Markets

Following the Cabinet's approval and the passage of legislation in early May 2002, Guyana implemented the revised CARICOM/Colombia Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement. In August, the Cabinet approved Guyana's participation in the CARICOM/Cuba Trade Agreement, and the Ministry engaged the Ministries of Finance and Legal Affairs to expedite the legal and administrative arrangements for the enforcement of the agreement.

In August also, the Ministry collaborated with the Brazilian Embassy in Georgetown and the Private sector to host a business seminar, which focused on the bilateral trade and investment possibilities between Guyana and Brazil.

These initiatives were all directed at deepening Guyana's relations with countries with which we share close ties, and where strong possibilities exist for our business community to develop niche markets for our products, as well as joint investment projects.

Regional Trade Matters

The country's trade relations with other CARICOM Member States are of principal importance, and much of what is done on the domestic front is linked to the integration efforts in CARICOM. In keeping with its rights and obligations as a Member State of the Caribbean Community, Guyana participates fully in the common external trade policy and trade arrangements of the Community.

The spheres of activities include the implementation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), as well as CARICOM's joint approach to the various external negotiations and the work of the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM).

Regarding the establishment of the CSME, the Ministry has continued to work with various agencies to implement national obligations under the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas.

Multilateral Trade Arrangements

In February 2002, CARICOM Heads of Government agreed on the appointment of Ministerial lead spokespersons for the region in the key external trade arenas. Guyana, in the person of the Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation, was designated the region's Ministerial spokesperson on World Trade Organization matters. Following this decision of the CARICOM Heads, Guyana's Embassy in Brussels was accredited as Guyana's *non-resident* Mission to the WTO, in Geneva. This was indeed a strategic move, bearing in mind the need to strengthening our institutional arrangements to effectively coordinate the country's participation in both the Geneva process at the WTO, and the ACP-EU negotiations in Brussels.

The WTO, in keeping with its mandate to conduct Trade Policy Reviews of its members, commenced a review of Guyana's trade policy in September 2002, with the aim of completing the review within a year, by October 2003.

To facilitate the review, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation the Ministry with responsibility for WTO matters coordinated the review process at the national level. A small internal Technical Committee was established under the chairmanship of the National Advisory Committee on External Negotiations (NACEN) Coordinator. In support of the work of the Committee, the Ministry held a number of inter-agency consultations under the chairmanship of the Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation. The work is expected to intensify in 2003.

ACP-EU Trade Relations

The ACP-EU negotiation for Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) was launched on September 27, 2002, in Brussels. ACP and EU Ministers agreed on a negotiating structure to focus on the following six thematic groups: *Market Access, Agriculture, Services, Development Issues, Trade Related Issues, and Legal Issues*. For each of the groups, lead Ministerial and Ambassadorial spokespersons were identified. Alternates at the Ministerial and Ambassadorial levels were also identified. Guyana (CARICOM) was identified as the Alternate Ambassadorial spokesperson for Agriculture.

As a Caribbean member of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP), Guyana is committed to the negotiations, and will remain actively engaged in that regard.

International Cooperation

The Ministry continued to mobilize technical and human resources to match Guyana's developmental needs. Resources were mobilized to implement programmes aimed at realizing the objectives of the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy, through capacity building and institutional strengthening.

Given its role as the national focal point for international economic cooperation matters, the Department of International Cooperation of the Ministry is strategically concerned with economic and technical cooperation initiatives that include assistance from regional, bilateral and multilateral donors.

During the year, there were tangible achievements through an intensification of cooperation with Guyana's bilateral economic partners, in particular the key countries which were identified for technical and economic cooperation, namely, Brazil, China, Cuba, India, Japan and South Korea.

The Ministry is committed to maintaining excellent relations with Guyana's regional, bilateral and multilateral partners, to strengthen and expand the scope of relations, during the year ahead.

John Isaacs
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2002

FOREIGN TRADE

A. MULTILATERAL TRADE RELATIONS

I. Establishment of a National Trade Negotiations Committee (N-TNC)

The Ministry took specific action in February 2002 to establish a National Trade Negotiations Committee (N-TNC), under the National Advisory Committee on External Negotiations (NACEN). The N-TNC is comprised of ten (10) technical working groups, each covering corresponding subject areas in the various external trade negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO), Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), the ACP-EU Post-Cotonou Negotiations and the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).

These Technical Working Groups (TWGs), which include both public and private sector representation at senior technical levels, allow for technical analyses of negotiating proposals and issues, and the development of national positions in the external negotiations. The N-TNC functions as the technical arm of the NACEN.

II. World Trade Organization (WTO)

• CARICOM Ministerial Spokespersons

In February 2002, CARICOM Heads of Government agreed on the appointment of Ministerial lead spokespersons for the region in the key external trade negotiating theatres. Appointments were made as follows:

- | | | |
|------------|---|---------------------|
| ▪ Barbados | - | ACP/EU negotiations |
| ▪ Jamaica | - | FTAA negotiations |
| ▪ Guyana | - | WTO negotiations |

The Heads of Government also identified other Ministers (small groups) to support the lead spokespersons in each area or "primary field".

Guyana's Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation was designated the region's Ministerial spokesperson on WTO matters. Barbados was assigned the overall coordinator of the Region's external negotiations.

To this end, the Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation, hosted the first meeting of the "WTO Primary Field", in Guyana, on May 27, 2002. Discussions were centered on key issues and strategies, which the region should pursue in the negotiations at the WTO. The conclusions and recommendations of the May 27 meeting were endorsed by the 13th meeting of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED), which was held in Georgetown, May 24-28, 2002.

- **Guyana's Embassy in Brussels accredited to the World Trade Organization (WTO)**

Subsequent to the Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation being named as the Region's Ministerial Spokesperson on WTO matters, our Embassy in Brussels was accredited as ~~Guyana's~~ *Guyana's non-resident* Mission to the WTO, in Geneva. This was seen as a strategic move, given the need to strengthen institutional arrangements, and effectively coordinate the country's participation in both the Geneva process at the WTO and the ACP-EU negotiations, in Brussels.

- **CARICOM/IDB WTO Implementation Project**

During the year, the CARICOM Secretariat coordinated the completion of a study under a CARICOM/IDB Technical Assistance Project, aimed at assisting Member States in the implementation of their WTO obligations. In this regard, consultants visited Guyana to advise on our obligations, and receive specific information in relation to the WTO Agreements on Trade-Related Investments Measures (TRIMS), Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS), General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), Agriculture, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS), Anti-dumping, and Import Licensing Procedures.

- **CARICOM Ministerial Mission to Geneva**

In September, a CARICOM Ministerial Mission, including the Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation, visited Geneva and held discussions with the new WTO Director- General, Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, who assumed office that very month. CARICOM Ministers took the opportunity to outline the concerns of the Caribbean Community, and agreed on a number of initiatives to improve the region's beneficial participation in the WTO process.

- **Services Negotiations**

The Fifth Meeting of the CARICOM Working Group on Services Negotiations was held in Georgetown, on May 22-23. The meeting focused mainly on specific aspects of external negotiations in services in the WTO and the FTAA, and also dealt with outstanding work on the regional arrangements for Trade in Services (Protocol II).

CARICOM Member States (including Guyana) were requested to consider draft proposals done by the CARICOM Secretariat, outlining areas where possible **Requests** could be made of other Members of the WTO, in the current negotiations on services.

The Ministry convened meetings involving representatives from the Private Sector, and other key stakeholders in the services industry, to discuss the proposals made by the CARICOM Secretariat. Unfortunately, responses were not readily forthcoming from these stakeholders, and this resulted in much of the analytical work having to be done by the Ministry, in order to ensure a submission of *initial requests* by Guyana.

- **WTO TRIPS Council Review Meeting**

A WTO TRIPS Council Review meeting was held on March 5, 2002 in Geneva. At that meeting, Japan, Switzerland, USA, EU and Canada raised questions concerning Guyana's TRIPS legislation and enforcement. With the assistance of the Ministry of Legal Affairs, the Ministry compiled Guyana's responses to the questions raised, for submission to the TRIPS Council during the 3rd Quarter of 2002.

- **WTO Notification on Import Licensing Procedures**

A first Notification by Guyana, under the Agreement on Import Licensing Procedures, was submitted to the WTO in March of 2002. The NACEN Coordinator recommended internal procedures for expediting Notifications by Guyana. The internal mechanism identifies the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation as the national coordinating agency or WTO contact point and subject-specific agencies has been identified as a National Enquiry Point (e.g. the Ministry of Agriculture is the national enquiry point for agriculture notifications, given its responsibility for agricultural matters).

- **WTO Trade Policy Review (TPR) of Guyana**

The WTO, in keeping with its mandate to conduct Trade Policy Reviews of its members, commenced a review of Guyana's trade policy in September 2002, with the aim of completing the review within a year, by October 2003.

To facilitate the Review the Ministry, with responsibility for WTO matters, coordinated the review process at the national level. A small internal Technical Committee was established under the chairmanship of the NACEN Coordinator. The Committee was tasked with coordinating all matters pertaining to the review process locally, including correspondence with the WTO Trade Policy Review Division. The work is expected to intensify in 2003.

For Guyana, the TPR process was organized in four (4) broad stages and timelines, as follows:

- **Stage I:** Submission of initial data for the compilation of the initial draft chapters of the Secretariat's Report (**September 2002 February 2003**);

(This first stage will culminate with a first visit of a technical Team from the WTO Trade Policies Review Division (TPRD) at the end of January 2003. The objective of the visit will be to conduct a sensitization seminar for the key government agencies and officials associated with the review process, and to collect relevant trade and economic data and information).

- **Stage II:** Review of the initial draft chapters of the Secretariat's Report (**March July 2003**);
- **Stage III:** Finalization of the Secretariat's Report (**August September 2003**);
- **Stage IV:** Presentation of the final TPR report on Guyana to the TPRD (**October 29 - 31 2003**).

III. ACP/EU TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

In preparation for the negotiations on Economic Partnership Arrangements (EPAs) under the Cotonou Agreement, Guyana participated in a number of meetings at the official/technical and ministerial levels to develop the region's positions on the negotiating guidelines, structure and content of the negotiations. The Caribbean positions were then incorporated with the five other geographical regions of the ACP to derive the ACP guidelines, structure and content, and scope of the negotiations on EPAs.

- **EPA Seminar**

A Caribbean Regional Seminar on EPAs was convened in Guyana on February 14, 2002, to sensitize the region of the EPA, and to seek to derive the region's position on EPAs.

- **Public Consultation**

On February 13, 2002, the Ministry organized a public symposium entitled "What does the Proposed EU/ACP Economic Partnership Agreement hold for Guyana and the Caribbean". On October 14, 2002, the Ministry convened a one-day national consultation at the Ocean View Convention Centre, on the proposed ACP-EU Negotiation for regional EPAs. The consultation was facilitated by the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM), and information was disseminated on EPAs to widen the public's understanding on how the negotiations could impact the Guyana economy and to begin the process of formulating national positions and sensitizing the private sector of the challenges of new WTO-compatible reciprocal trade arrangements with the EU. Public and private sector officials, non-state actors, including NGOs and Trade Unions, participated in the consultations.

- **Launch of the EPA Negotiations**

The ACP-EU negotiations for regional EPAs were launched at a *Special Meeting of the ACP/EU Ministerial Council* on September 27, 2002, in Brussels. The Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation headed Guyana's delegation to this meeting. The negotiations will be undertaken in two phases. Phase I will address issues and concerns of all ACP countries, and is referred to as an "All-ACP Phase". This phase of the negotiations will be conducted during the period September 2002 to August 2003. Phase II of the negotiations will commence in September 2003, and will address issues and concerns of specific interest to countries and regions of the ACP Group.

ACP Ministers also agreed on the ACP guidelines, structure, scope and content of the negotiations, which will focus on the following six negotiating themes/clusters: Market Access, Agriculture, Services, Development Issues, Trade related Issues, and Legal issues.

For each of the clusters, lead Ministerial and Ambassadorial spokespersons were identified. Alternates at the Ministerial and Ambassadorial levels were also identified. The Caribbean region will serve as lead Ministerial spokesperson on Services and Alternate on Legal issues. Guyana (CARICOM) has been identified as the Alternate Ambassadorial spokesperson for Agriculture.

Rice

European Union Support for the development of the CARIFORUM Rice Industry

- Guyana stands to benefit from EU support aimed at improving the competitiveness of the CARIFORUM Rice Industry. Consultants recruited by the EU completed preparation of a national action plan for Guyana, and a regional action plan and financing proposal. The Ministry facilitated this exercise by establishing an inter-agency project review team, comprising of government and private sector stakeholders of the rice industry. The team monitored the progress in developing the national and regional action plans and the financing proposal that is now awaiting the financing decision of the European Development Fund (EDF) Committee.

The Ministry coordinated closely with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Guyana Rice Development Board (GRDB), and other stakeholders in the industry, to undertake a number of lobbying initiatives at the EU Commission level, in Brussels, to ensure that the rice sector receive adequate funding for its development in keeping with the provisions of the Rice Declaration, annexed to the Cotonou Agreement. Guyana also coordinated with Suriname in advancing joint lobbying initiatives.

- In June 2002, Trade Ministers from Guyana and Suriname lobbied Mr. Friedrich Hamburger, Director for the Caribbean Department in DG Development, and Mr. Ingo Feustel, Head of the Division of Trade Directorate, of the European Commission, for adequate financial assistance in the form of grants to meet the development of the rice industries of Guyana and Suriname.
- The ACP Council of Ministers of Trade Meeting in the Dominican Republic, in June 2002, issued a Resolution deploring the apparent lethargy and indifference displayed by the EU Commission towards the EU's commitments expressed in the Joint Declaration on Rice. The motion for a resolution was jointly submitted by Guyana and Suriname.
- At a Meeting of the ACP/EU Joint Working Party on Rice, Guyana drew the EU's attention to the negative implications of the EU proposed lowering of the intervention price of rice in the EU market, as well as the slow pace for the EDF support to the region's rice industry.
- At the 4th ACP/EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, held in March 2002, Guyana and Suriname were successful in having a Resolution on Rice adopted. The Resolution addressed the concerns of the ACP rice producers and exporters in light of the actions or inaction of the EU. ACP Ministers of Trade at their 76th Meeting in December 2002 also considered a motion submitted by Guyana on Rice, and issued a Resolution on the matter.

Sugar

- In February 2002, Guyana, represented by its Ambassador in Brussels, participated in a lobbying mission to Portugal and Finland. The mission raised concerns relating to the unfair burden-sharing imposed on ACP sugar exporters in the context of the EU's Everything-But-Arms (EBA) initiative, and its impact on the Special Preferential Sugar Arrangements (SPS) from which Guyana and other small developing countries are benefiting.
- At the 75th Session of the ACP Council of Ministers, Guyana supported a Resolution, which called on the EU to maintain and honour its commitments under the Sugar Protocol, to recognize the importance of the sugar industry in the growth and development of the participating states, and to ensure that the EU's commitments in the WTO are maintained to ensure that the ACP continues to benefit from guaranteed prices, etc.
- **Brazil/Australia WTO Challenge to the EU Sugar regime**

Australia and Brazil filed separate requests at the WTO in September 2002, challenging the WTO compatibility of the EU Sugar Regime, under which Guyana and other sugar producing and supplying

states benefit from preferential access to the EU markets. Guyana and other CARICOM sugar producing and supplying countries requested third party status at the WTO consultations.

The Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation represented Guyana in an ACP lobbying mission to Britain and France, from November 17-18, 2002. He also attended a meeting of the ACP Enlarged Sugar Bureau with the European Community on November 19, 2002.

On November 20-22, 2002, Guyana among other ACP states, presented statements at the WTO consultations on the Brazil/Australia challenge. Guyana's statement highlighted the importance of the rice industry to the economic, social, political and cultural development of the Guyanese economy. The Ministry will continue to monitor developments and engage in consultations with the ACP Sugar Bureau, and stakeholders of the sugar industry, with the view that the challenge would be withdrawn or settled outside the WTO framework.

CARIFORUM Ministers Meeting

The 12th meeting of CARIFORUM Ministers was convened in St Vincent and the Grenadines, in October 2002. Guyana was represented at the Official and Ministerial sessions. The meeting focused on the regional support strategy and funding under the 9th EDF Programme.

III. FREE TRADE AREA OF THE AMERICAS (FTAA)

Current negotiations for the establishment of a hemispheric-wide Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) are well advanced. These negotiations are scheduled to be concluded at the end of 2004.

Guyana has been participating actively in the FTAA negotiations from the inception, and continues to do so within the framework of CARICOM's joint approach to the external negotiations. Of the ten FTAA groups, Guyana has committed itself to actively participate in four groups, namely, the Negotiating Groups on Market Access (NGMA) and Agriculture (NGAG), the Consultative Group on Smaller Economies (CGSE), and the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC).

• Regional Integration Fund (RIF) and the Hemispheric Cooperation Programme (HCP)

From the inception of the Summit of the Americas (SOA) process in December 1994, Guyana spearheaded the Caribbean Community's call for the implementation of a Regional Integration Fund (RIF) that would help the "smaller economies" respond effectively to the adjustment challenges that would arise from the implementation of the FTAA, and the adjustment to the hemispheric trade liberalization.

In 2002, after several years of lobbying and active representation by the CARICOM group, Trade Ministers of the hemisphere met in November, and for the first time since the FTAA process commenced in June

1995, agreed to the creation of a Hemispheric Cooperation Programme (HCP) to assist countries in three key areas:

- i. Participation in the external negotiations;
- ii. Implementation of trade commitments; and
- iii. Adjustment to integration (into the hemispheric and global trading environment).

The Ministers also mandated the technical negotiators to discuss the critical matter of funding for the Programme and the identification of the sources of such financial resources.

- **Market Access Negotiations**

In July 2002, the Ministry commenced the national preparations for market access negotiations in the FTAA negotiations. In this regard, the Ministry, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and other agencies, commenced the development of a Guyana list of "sensitive" products. This "sensitive" list was approved by the Cabinet in September, and will be used to prepare Guyana's market access offers in goods.

- **FTAA Hemispheric Database (HDB)**

All FTAA Member States are required to submit trade data, on an annual basis, to the FTAA Hemispheric Database (HDB). The Ministry collaborated with the Bureau of Statistics and submitted the requisite trade data for 1997 and 1998, to the CRNM and the FTAA Tripartite Committee (IDB). All efforts will be made to submit outstanding data for 2000 and 2001, in 2003.

B. REGIONAL TRADE MATTERS

I. 12th Meeting of the CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) January 2002

Guyana chaired the 12th Meeting of the CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED), held in Georgetown, from January 23-25, 2002. The following issues were proposed by Guyana for discussion:

- Technical Assistance in relation to SPS Barriers to Trade in FTAA negotiations,
- Methods and Modalities for Tariff Negotiations in the FTAA, and
- A Common Approach at FTAA Negotiations concerning a Positive vs. Negative List Approach for Trade in Services.

Guyana and Jamaica held bilateral discussions, pursuant to a decision that was taken at the 11th meeting of COTED, in May 2001, concerning the re-insertion of paddy on the List of Items Ineligible for Conditional Duty Exemptions. This matter was not resolved, and the parties were encouraged to continue bilateral discussions in pursuit of an amicable solution.

Guyana also tabled proposals on a “Regional Monitoring Mechanism for Rice”, and a “Safeguard Mechanism for Rice”. The monitoring mechanism is intended to monitor intra-regional trade and extra-regional imports of rice into the region, while the safeguard mechanism is aimed at protecting the interests of regional rice producers against the volatility of world prices. Member States required additional time to study the proposals.

II. 13th Meeting of the CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED May 2002)

The 13th meeting of the CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) was held from May 24-28. in Georgetown. Agricultural sector issues constituted the major part of the agenda for this meeting.

Guyana's proposal for a “Regional Monitoring Mechanism” for the trade in rice in CARICOM was approved. Also, significant progress was made in relation to Guyana's proposal for a Safeguard Mechanism for Rice; however, Guyana was requested to refine the Proposal, taking into account the views of members.

III. Review of the Common External Tariff (CET)

The CARICOM Secretariat implemented a Project entitled '*The Review of the Common External Tariff and Instruments Governing Trade in Goods in CARICOM*'. The Project is aimed at enhancing the operation of the regime for trade in goods within CARICOM and with the rest of the world, consistent with the international obligations of all Member States. The Ministry facilitated the necessary local arrangements for the Project Consultants to meet with key officials in Government and the Private Sector.

IV. Establishment of the CSME

- ***Implementation of the Programme for the Removal of Restrictions Inconsistent with the Revised Treaty***

Guyana's programme for the “removal of restriction inconsistent with the provisions of the Revised Treaty (Protocol II)”, which was submitted to the CARICOM Secretariat in 2001, was accepted by the Conference of Heads of Government during their Inter-Sessional Meeting in February 2002. The programme became effective from March 1, 2002.

The Ministry, as the coordinating agency for the implementation of the CSME nationally, convened several rounds of Inter-Agency Consultations with a view to commencing the implementation process of the programme.

- **Draft Manual of Administrative Procedures**

A national workshop on the CSME Draft Manual was convened during 2002. The main thrust of the draft Manual is to strengthen national public service capacity to serve the requirements of the CSME; as well as to introduce and operate essential systems and procedures at the national and regional levels for the efficient and effective operation of the CSME. The Manual will be a working guide for public service officials who are engaged in discharging duties to give effect to the CSME. It was designed to complement and give effect to legislative measures (already in place or proposed,) so that officials can effectively facilitate the movement of skilled persons, capital, goods and services, by according national treatment (treating foreigners and locals equally) to nationals of all Member States that are signatories to the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas.

- **Caribbean Transnational Conference**

During 2002, the Minister of Foreign Trade to International Cooperation represented Guyana at the Caribbean Transnational Conference, which was convened in Jamaica from April 18- 21, 2002. This Conference brought together the Region's Trade Ministers and Private Sector officials. The focus of the Conference was on the role of the Private Sector in the implementation of the CSME. The Conference recommended an Eleven-Point Plan of Action and other initiatives, which included a recommendation for the advancement of the deadline for the implementation of the CSME.

V. CARICOM Trade Agreements

Guyana has acceded to Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) between CARICOM and third countries, namely, Colombia, Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba. A similar Agreement is pending with Costa Rica.

- **CARICOM/Colombia Agreement on Trade, Economic and Technical Cooperation**

In May 2002, following the approval of the Cabinet, Guyana ratified and implemented the Protocol Amending the CARICOM-Colombia Agreement on Trade, Economic and Technical Cooperation.

- **CARICOM/Venezuela Trade and Investment Agreement**

The 5th Meeting of the CARICOM-Venezuela Joint Council on Trade and Investment, met in October 2002, after several attempts to convene the meeting earlier in the year failed. The main issues considered at that meeting were an evaluation of the Implementation of the Agreement, and CARICOM proposals with respect to Venezuela's request for extension of preferential tariffs that were granted by CARICOM Most Developed Countries (MDCs) to Colombia. The Joint Council also addressed the difficulties that were

encountered by CARICOM Member States in accessing the Venezuelan market. Guyana participated in that meeting and proposed a number of products for addition to the list of products to benefit from preferential access into the Venezuelan market.

A Technical Meeting between the two sides was subsequently held in December. The meeting initiated discussion on the Lists of Products to be traded freely by both sides, and the text of a Protocol to amend the Agreement. The two sides also sought to reconcile the differences in Tariff Headings in the CARICOM and Venezuela Tariff as they relate to products annexed to the Agreement.

- **CARICOM-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement**

Following the provisional implementation of this Agreement by other CARICOM Member States, and the previous Revenue Impact Assessment done by the Ministry, Cabinet requested further analysis to be done to determine the competitiveness of products with the potential for export to the Dominican Republic market. As a result, Cabinet established a Special Sub-Committee under the chairmanship of the Secretary, to the Cabinet to examine the matter in greater detail.

The Sub-Committee subsequently tasked the Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce to conduct a product-by-product revenue impact assessment of the Agreement. These findings are expected to be available in 2003.

- **CARICOM/Cuba Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement**

In August 2002, Cabinet granted approval for Guyana to proceed with the ratification and implementation of the CARICOM-Cuba Agreement. In this regard, the Ministries of Finance and Legal Affairs scheduled the implementation to be effected at the beginning of 2003.

C. BILATERAL TRADE RELATIONS

I. Guyana-Venezuela Partial Scope Agreement

The second meeting of the Guyana-Venezuela High Level Bilateral Commission was held during February 2002, in Georgetown. At this meeting, the Venezuelan delegation formally conveyed their interest in renewing and revising the 1989 Guyana-Venezuela Partial Scope Agreement.

II. Guyana-Brazil Partial Scope Agreement

In keeping with a specific decision taken at the 12th meeting of the CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) to amend the Guyana-Brazil Partial Scope Agreement, the Ministry consulted with the CARICOM Secretariat, in an effort to expedite the mandate of the COTED, and at the same time to work toward the full implementation of the Agreement.

In an effort to strengthen bilateral trade relations between Guyana and Brazil the Ministry, in collaboration with the Embassy of Brazil and the Private Sector of Guyana, hosted a seminar entitled "Doing Business with Brazil", at the Le Meridien Pegasus, in August.

The focus of the seminar was to sensitize businessmen of ways and means of enhancing and expanding cross border trade between Guyana and Brazil. The seminar included a mini exhibition of Guyanese products.

III. Guyana-Argentina Trade Relations

The Ministry submitted a counterproposal to a draft Trade Agreement proposed by Argentina. It is expected that the two sides will engage in discussions in 2003.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

A. BILATERAL COOPERATION

I. BRAZIL

The Ministry of Fisheries, Crops and Livestock benefitted from technical assistance from the Federative Republic of Brazil, in the following areas:

- Dairy Cattle Production
- Food Security in the Hinterland of Guyana
- The Designing of an Effective Acoushi Ant Control System for Organic Farming in the Hinterland Regions

▼ The Ministry of Foreign and International Cooperation collaborated with the Brazilian authorities on this initiative.

- **National Coordinating Committee: Sectoral Development Plan for Region 9**

Consultations on a Sectoral Development Plan for Region 9 on a ministry-by-ministry basis are underway. The Ministries of Health and Local Government have submitted proposals for the development agenda. The Department of International Cooperation is awaiting the submission of proposals from the other Ministries.

- **Cross Border Relations**

- **International Road Transport Agreement**

Inter-agency consultations on cross border activities were convened with a view to concluding the International Road Transport Agreement. Efforts are being made by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation to have all amendments and queries on the proposed text resolved before year-end for possible signing of the agreement in January 2003.

- **Takatu River Bridge**

Construction of the Takatu Bridge has been stalled to allow for an internal audit by the Brazilian Government. Construction of the bridge is expected to commence by March 2003.

- **Guyana/Brazil Bilateral Technical Cooperation**

- **New areas for the 2003 Work Programme**

Consultations were undertaken with various government agencies to ascertain initiatives for new areas of technical cooperation with Brazil. The Ministries of Amerindian Affairs; Local Government and Regional Development; Labour; Human Services and Social Security; Office of the President; Guyana Defense Force; and University of Guyana submitted project proposals for the new areas of technical cooperation with Brazil for 2003. These initiatives were communicated to the Guyana Embassy in Brazil for further consultations and consideration by the competent Brazilian authorities.

- **NARI-EMBRAPA Memorandum of Understanding and Technical Cooperation Programmes**

Consultations have been ongoing with the National Agricultural Research Institute and the Brazilian Agricultural Research Agency (EMBRAPA) in relation to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to promote agricultural development. NARI and EMBRAPA have both considered and concurred with the

MOU and TCP agreement. The project is under consideration by the competent Brazilian Authorities. The agreement is expected to be concluded shortly.

➤ **IPED-SEBRAE/RR Memorandum of Understanding**

Consultations between the Institute of Private Enterprise Development (IPED) and the Brazilian Agency for the Promotion of Small and Micro Businesses (SEBRAE)/RR are continuing to ascertain when and where the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be signed. Conclusion of the agreement is expected in the first quarter of 2003.

II. MEXICO

➤ The Ministry of Fisheries, Crops and Livestock submitted a project proposal for technical assistance in the agro-industry. The project is under consideration by the Mexican Government.

Guyana participated in the project "Production and Commercialization of Crafts" in Mexico City, during May 26-31, 2002. Two officials from the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports participated in this event. The Department of International Cooperation was tasked with facilitating the participation of the two officials in this activity.

➤ Consultations are currently in progress for the promotion of further technical cooperation projects with Mexico in the year 2003.

III. RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Since the advent of the Russian Federation, Guyana and Russia have been engaging in consultations with a view to renewing bilateral relations.

➤ In 1977, Guyana and the Russian Federation concluded an agreement on cooperation in the field of fisheries, but this agreement has been dormant for a considerable period of time. Reactivation of the Fishing Agreement would be in the interest of both countries.

To this end, the Department of International Cooperation initiated a consultation process, which is ongoing, and which it is hoped will also see the strengthening of ties between the Russian Federation and Guyana, in the areas of education and training.

IV. COLOMBIA

➤ The year 2002 saw the strengthening of relationships between Guyana and Colombia in different areas of cooperation.

The Department of International Cooperation continued to make requests on behalf of the Government of Guyana to benefit from the acquisition of DDT, which plays a vital role in Guyana's preventative vector control strategy.

Guyana currently has a Joint Commission arrangement which is the overarching mechanism for technical cooperation programs with Colombia.

Initiatives were taken to continue cooperation with Colombia in the following three areas:

- Technological Improvement of the Intermediate Savannahs
- Feedlot Development for Beef Cattle
- Establishment of a Geographic Information System Unit

Technological Improvement of the Intermediate Savannahs (INSAP)

The first phase of the project began with the visit by a Colombian expert to conduct a study on soil testing. Two experts from NARI visited Colombia during November 05-09, 2002 to proceed with the second phase of the project. These experts benefited through familiarization with Colombian experience in this area.

Feedlot Development for Beef Cattle

The Department of International Cooperation is also in consultation with various beneficiary agencies with the aim of stimulating Colombia's assistance in Feedlot Development for Beef cattle in Guyana.

Geographic Information Systems Unit

In relation to the establishment of a Geographic Information Systems Unit, two Colombian experts visited Guyana during the period October 27-November 03, 2002, to conduct training in this field.

V. CUBA

- The health sector benefited from the services of a medical brigade comprising forty-one (41) doctors currently attached to the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation, and the Linden Hospital Complex. The Department facilitated English Language training for the Cuban doctors.
- In the area of higher learning, one hundred and twenty-four (124) scholarship nominees departed Guyana for Cuba in September 2002, to undertake studies in the fields of agriculture, medicine and engineering.
- Guyana will also benefit from the presence of Cuban experts in the agricultural and fisheries sector. The Department of International Cooperation is currently engaged in facilitating the arrival of a Shrimp

Cultivation and Harvesting expert in January 2003. The Ministry of Fisheries, Crops and Livestock will also benefit from Cuban expertise in beehive development. A Guyanese technician is expected to participate in a Dairy Development programme in Cuba, early 2003.

- Cuban Pathologist, Nancy Sitchao, extended her services to Guyana on a six (6) month stint, and is willing to return upon request.
- A decision was taken to embark on the establishment of a Cancer Treatment Centre and a Dialysis Centre in Guyana. Assistance for a feasibility study of this project was sought from Cuba. The Cuban Embassy is awaiting the Terms of Reference from the Ministry of Health. The Department of International Cooperation will continue to monitor progress in the establishment of these centers.
- The Eleventh International Fair, Expo Caribe, was convened in Cuba, during the period June 9-14, 2002. It saw participation by representatives of local private sector entities. The event was aimed at fostering increased commercial relations between Cuba and other Caribbean States.
- The Department facilitated and monitored the signing of the Agreement on Maritime Transportation, between the Governments of Guyana and Cuba, during the commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Guyana and Cuba, in Havana, on December 13, 2002.
- The Department facilitated a visit by a Guyana Sugar Corporation delegation (GUYSUCO) to Cuba. This delegation benefited from Cuban experience in electric co-generation, and the production of derivatives. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between GUYSUCO and TECNOAZUCAR of Cuba, with the expectation of active cooperation between the two entities.
- Additionally, initiatives were taken to revive the cooperation agreement between the Guyana Export Promotion Council (GEPC) and the Promotion Center for Cuban Exports (CEPEC) on Export Promotion. A date for the signing of this agreement is to be determined. Monitoring the signing of this Agreement will be pursued by the Department, in 2003.
- The Department of International Cooperation will continue to monitor, coordinate and facilitate initiatives and cooperation programmes during the year 2003.

VI. COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA

- ▼ Guyana and the Commonwealth of Dominica are currently in the process of establishing relations under the Guyana/Dominica Joint Commission. A mutually convenient date for the inaugural session of the Joint Commission between the two countries is still to be identified. Initiatives in this area are being renewed and consultations are expected to proceed at a regional forum.

VII. DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

During the year 2002, Guyana and the Dominican Republic pursued their bilateral relations. The possibility of concluding the Guyana/Dominican Republic Bilateral Agreement still exists. This initiative will be followed up closely during 2003. The Agreement is expected to promote cooperation in trade, technical and scientific cooperation, and investment between the two countries. The Government of the Dominican Republic was written to on this matter in July 2002. The Ministry is awaiting a response in order to commence bilateral consultations with the Dominican Republic.

The Department of International Cooperation will continue to pursue the conclusion of this Agreement in 2003.

VIII. VENEZUELA

Meetings of a sub-committee established under the Guyana/Venezuela High Level Bilateral Commission were convened. The sub-committee examined bilateral arrangements in the areas of transportation, trade and economic cooperation.

A delegation departed Guyana in October 2002 to proceed with discussions on a way forward for cooperation under the Guyana/Venezuela High Level Bilateral Commission in Caracas, Venezuela.

Other areas of cooperation will be pursued during the year 2003.

IX. JAMAICA

Following the establishment of the Guyana/Jamaica Joint Commission, which was inaugurated in September 1997, initiatives aimed at enhancing cooperation between Guyana and Jamaica were taken.

The Government of Guyana has indicated its interest in reviewing those initiatives with the Jamaican authorities. The Government of Jamaica has responded in an effort to move this process forward, and both Jamaica and Guyana are currently reviewing these initiatives. The various beneficiary agencies on the Guyanese side are expected to respond to the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation to indicate their interest in initiatives or proposals for new areas of cooperation with Jamaica.

Further inter-agency consultations were convened and will continue with the aim of prioritizing these initiatives.

The Department of International Cooperation will continue to monitor progress in these areas of cooperation, during 2003.

X. SURINAME

Relations between Guyana and Suriname on cooperation programmes for the year under review were relatively dormant. However, the Department is tasked with the responsibility of coordinating and facilitating any cooperation programme or agreement that may emerge during the upcoming year.

XI. GERMANY

Cooperation with Federal Republic of Germany for the greater part of 2002 was dormant. However, an initiative was taken to resuscitate the Natural Resources Management project. This project is a collaborative effort between Guyana and Germany to strengthen natural resources management in Guyana, and was implemented in 1994.

The Federal Republic of Germany agreed to continue its bilateral technical cooperation with Guyana under the Natural Resources Management project. The project agreement currently in force will enable Guyana to apply for assistance in sustainable Natural Resources Management. Moreover, the duration of the current phase of the project has been extended to December 31, 2003.

The Department will continue to monitor progress of the implementation of the project, during the year 2003.

XII. TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Bilateral cooperation between Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago progressed during the year under review. The Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation has been engaged in initiating discussions with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in an effort to implement cooperation programmes during 2002. The letter and spirit of the Guyana/Trinidad and Tobago High Level Bilateral Commission, inaugurated in February 2002, was one of the areas for resuscitation.

Initiatives were also taken to reactivate the Guyana/Trinidad and Tobago Fishing Agreement. These negotiations have progressed fairly with the Ministry of Fisheries, Crops and Livestock submitting project proposals to move the process forward. Possibilities of the negotiations entering into a new phase are receiving the attention of the Ministry of Fisheries, Crops and Livestock.

Further, a series of official meetings were convened by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation to facilitate the preparation of a sector-by-sector **Executive Summary** on irritants which tend to impede trade with Trinidad and Tobago.

In January 2003, the **Executive Summary** is expected to be submitted to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago

to redress the current intra-regional trade imbalance. Also, during 2003 discussions are expected to resume in an effort to reactivate the Guyana/Trinidad and Tobago Fishing Agreement.

XIII. INDIA

- During the year 2002, Guyana benefited from the services of three Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme experts in the areas of radiology, crop planning/forecasting and digital technology.
- There are several agreements expected to be concluded shortly. The University of Guyana and the Indira Gandhi Open University are in the process of finalizing course outlines/modules which would allow for the conclusion and subsequent signing of a cooperation agreement.
- The Guyana/India Joint Business Council was established to pursue business opportunities between Guyana and India.
- A Memorandum of Understanding is expected to be concluded and signed between the National Agricultural and Research Institute (NARI) and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), for collaborative research in agriculture for the promotion of agricultural development in Guyana, early 2003.

A work plan for 2003-2004 is also expected to be finalized under the MOU. This is expected to provide for study visits of Indian Agricultural experts to Guyana, and for the training of Guyana's Agricultural Scientists in India

- A Memorandum of Understanding was also concluded between the Institute of Applied Science and Technology (IAST) and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) for the promotion of technical and scientific cooperation. The project on the production of bio-plates and leaf cups was implemented.

Guyana/India Joint Commission

During the Third Session of the Guyana/India Joint Commission, which was convened in New Delhi, in November 2000, a number of cooperation programmes were agreed upon. An agreement on the abolition of visas for holders of diplomatic and service/officials passport, was concluded.

The department is currently facilitating the implementation of other cooperation programmes, and preparations for the hosting of the fourth session of the Guyana/India Joint Commission. This session of the Guyana/India Joint Commission is expected to be convened in Guyana, during the third quarter of 2003.

A Cultural Cooperation Agreement and work programme for 2003/2004 is currently under consideration by the Government of India. The Agreement is expected to be concluded shortly.

During the year under review, the department submitted requests for various Ministries for the deputation of experts under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme. Terms of Reference are to be submitted by some Government agencies.

The Department, during the upcoming year, will pursue these requests and preparation for the Joint Commission is expected to intensify.

XIV. CHINA

- Exchange of Notes facilitating receipt of the fourth batch of medical doctors was signed in June 2002. The medical doctors are currently attached to the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation, and the Linden Hospital Complex. The department continues to monitor the work of the Chinese medical doctors.
- There are four Chinese Investment Projects that are being monitored by the Department. These include:
 - Sanata Textiles
 - Bicycle Assembly Plant
 - Vegetable Cultivation Farm
 - The Bellu Clay Brick Factory
- During September 2002, maintenance and general servicing was effected to the Moco-Moco Hydropower Plant. Upon completion, a Certificate of Completion was signed.
- An important initiative resulted in China's agreement to construct an International Conference Centre in Guyana. The first set of Exchange of Notes was signed on September 19, 2002, to commence work on the first phase of the International Conference Centre. A nine-member Chinese survey team visited and carried out a preliminary survey of the proposed site. A design contract is expected to be signed in January 2003.
- The Department will continue to monitor and facilitate the implementation of the Guyana International Conference Centre Project.
- The Department facilitated the visits of a number of Chinese trade and investment delegations in 2002.
- Guyana also participated in six (6) Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) training courses offered by the Chinese Government. Candidates were nominated from the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Fisheries, Crops and Livestock, and the University of Guyana.
- The Department also commenced preparatory work for the Eighth Session of the Guyana/China Joint Commission, by convening and facilitating inter-agency consultations. The Joint Commission is expected to be held simultaneously with the President's state visit to China, during the first quarter of 2003.

- The Chinese tabled a draft Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT), which is complimentary to the Guyana/China Trade Agreement. During 2003, consultations were held with the relevant agencies with a view to finalize and conclude the BIT at the Guyana/China Joint Commission in 2003.
- Through an initiative by the Government of Guyana and the People's Republic of China a mushroom cultivation pilot project at the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) was realized. The project was completed and implemented successfully. The Department will continue to monitor progress on the request for technical assistance in mushroom cultivation made by the Ministry of Agriculture.
- The Department will continue to monitor progress on these initiatives, and pursue new cooperation programmes in the year ahead.

XV. JAPAN

- The project for the 'Reconstruction of the New Amsterdam Hospital' was also implemented. The implementation saw the signing of the Exchange of Notes for Phase I of the project on August 20, 2002. The construction work is expected to commence in April 2003. The Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation is expected to coordinate and monitor the overall progress of the project.
- Japanese Grant Aid constitutes a number of projects which the Government of Japan funds and which are of specific developmental value for Guyana.

The Department of International Cooperation continued its role as the coordinating agency, and facilitated Guyana's participation in a number of technical training courses offered by the Government of Japan, mainly in the fisheries, agriculture and health sectors.

- Guyana also saw the participation of a representative from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the Eighth CARICOM/Japan Consultations, in November 2002. Guyana is expected to benefit from projects funded at the regional level.
- The Department coordinated and convened preparatory and inter-agency consultations for Guyana's participation in the Caribbean Exhibition Fair held in Tokyo, Japan, on November 05-06, 2002. Unfortunately, Guyana was not represented due to unforeseen circumstances.
- The Japanese Government granted a request for the services of a Japanese Rice Milling expert. The expert arrived here in October 2002, and was attached to the Guyana Rice Development Board (GRDB) for two (2) months.
- The Department is expected to monitor the overall progress and to coordinate projects in 2003. It is also expected to facilitate Guyana's participation in technical training programmes in 2003, and to monitor the utilization of counter value funds generated from the Japanese Non-Project Grant Aid procurement

process. The counter value funds are expected to be used in the construction of the CARICOM Secretariat. Efforts at applying for Japanese Grant Aid will also continue.

XVI. REPUBLIC OF KOREA

- The Department vigorously coordinated and facilitated the implementation of the Korean Grant Aid Programme, making Guyana a beneficiary of five (5) vehicles from the Korean Government, in December 2002.
- The visit by a Korean business and trade delegation in September 2002 resulted in strengthened bilateral relations. The resumption of negotiations for the conclusion of a Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) with Korea was facilitated through consultations with the visiting delegation.

The proposed BIT tabled by the Koreans is expected to be concluded during 2003. Meanwhile the Department of International Cooperation will continue to convene consultations on the proposed BIT. Efforts at securing Korean Grant Aid, and the participation by government officials in training courses offered by the Korean Government, will be pursued in the coming year.

XVII. MALAYSIA

Initiatives are being made for Guyana to benefit from cooperation programmes with Malaysia. Requests were made for technical assistance from Malaysia in the cultivation of rambutan, and the production of palm oil. Consultations are in train for the implementation of two (2) technical assistance programmes.

The department is expected to monitor the progress of the two (2) cooperation initiatives during the upcoming year.

XVIII. KUWAIT

At present, Guyana and Kuwait have opted to begin negotiations on two draft agreements for possible conclusion and finalization in the next year.

The first round of negotiations on the draft Agreement on Double Taxation is slated for the period February 17-20, 2003, in Georgetown. The second round of discussions on the Protection and Encouragement of Investment between Guyana and Kuwait is scheduled for the period May 26-29, 2003.

The Department of International Cooperation is expected to facilitate bilateral consultations, and to monitor the conclusion and signing of the two agreements.

XIX. SPAIN

The Department of International Cooperation is monitoring a proposal that was submitted to Spain to develop bilateral relations with that country, and the conclusion of a Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) to promote economic, scientific and technical relations.

Consultations are ongoing in relation to this issue.

XX. ITALY

The Government of Guyana is a beneficiary of the Italian Soft Loan Programme. Guyana is to receive a soft loan of 3.305 million euro dollars for the rehabilitation, maintenance and construction of drainage and irrigation facilities in the Mahaica-Mahaicony-Abary region.

The Minister of Finance signed the Financial Convention on behalf of the Government of Guyana on August 20, 2002. The Procurement Agreement which allows for Italy to commence the procurement of equipment from Italy on behalf of the drainage and irrigation project is expected to be signed in early 2003. The implementation of the Soft Loan is expected to commence hereafter.

B. MULTILATERAL COOPERATION

I. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR)

During 2002, the Department of International Cooperation continued its role as coordinator and focal point for Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues.

The Department facilitated the participation of several Government officials in overseas seminars on IPR related matters. The main beneficiary was the Attorney General's Chambers.

Guyana participated in the Ministerial meeting of Caribbean Ministers on Intellectual Property, held in June 2002, in Suriname.

Guyana became a beneficiary of the WIPOnet Project, implemented by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Consultations on a 2003 Work Programme for cooperation with WIPO were conducted, in collaboration with a visiting WIPO consultant, in September 2002.

The Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation led a delegation of representatives of CARICOM member states to Geneva for a meeting with the Director-General of WIPO, during September 24-26, 2002. ions on

Consultations on a Work Programme for the region in 2003 were also held during the visit.

The Department will continue to monitor the implementation of projects for cooperation with WIPO, and to execute Guyana/WIPO Work Programme for 2003, which includes the convening of seminars for IPR, overseas seminars and workshops, and other areas of technical assistance. Follow-up on initiatives discussed with the Director-General of WIPO on a Caribbean Regional Intellectual Property for 2003 will also be pursued.

II. LATIN AMERICA ECONOMIC SYSTEM (SELA)

During the year under review, cooperation with Latin America Economic System (SELA) has been somewhat dormant.

However, during the latter part of the year, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation held consultations at the inter-ministerial level to examine benefits which can be accrued from SELA.

Discussions were convened to identify measures that could be taken to intensify relations with SELA, and its various technical sub-committees.

III. EU-LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN (EU-LAC)

Efforts were made in 2002 to explore avenues for the implementation of international cooperation processes. The Director-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs represented Guyana at the EU-LAC Director's Meeting, held in Costa Rica, during the period November 28-29, 2002.

The Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation is attempting to establish simple mechanisms to submit project proposals, and to convene a follow-up meeting during the proceeding year to discuss and adopt simple mechanisms for the implementation of cooperation processes.

IV. ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS)

The monitoring of progress with respect to the different areas of cooperation under the OAS is the responsibility of the Department of International Cooperation. During the year under review, the Department monitored several cooperation initiatives to strengthen the relations with the Organization of American States (OAS).

The Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation consulted and disseminated to the relevant agencies several training programmes, scholarships, and fellowship offers.

The Department also facilitated the transmission of application forms for scholarships and training opportunities to

the OAS office, in Guyana.

Consultations were held with beneficiary Ministries on the preparation of project profiles for submission to OAS by April 2003, under the regional programming framework for 2003-2005. The Department will continue to monitor the submission of these and other projects during 2003.

V. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF MIGRATION (IOM)

The International Organization of Migration (IOM) is a recently affiliated cooperation initiative with the Government of Guyana.

In September 2002, Ms. Francis Sullivan, Regional Representative of IOM visited Guyana to solicit the country's interest in the activities of the organization.

Ms. Sullivan paid courtesy calls on several Government agencies, and outlined the benefits to be accrued from membership as observer or full member.

A memorandum was prepared for Cabinet's consideration informing that some form of affiliation to IOM would be in Guyana's best interest. The Department is expected to monitor the progress of work as it relates to Guyana's affiliation to the IOM.

C. GENERAL MATTERS

I. Recruitment of Staff

The Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation embarked on a recruitment drive in August 2002. In September of 2002, five new Foreign Trade Officers were added to existing staff to deputize in the Department of International Cooperation.

II. Training

Three officers from the Department of International Cooperation attended overseas workshops and seminars in Suriname, Chile and Switzerland, respectively, during the year 2002.

III. New Initiatives

A decision was taken that, in addition to a written report, officers attending overseas and local workshops and seminars are to hold departmental 'report-back' sessions with other members of staff, as a means of imparting newly acquired knowledge. During these sessions, officers are expected to make specific mention of how their participation would help to enhance their personal development and performance on the job, the development of the Department, and Guyana.

Another new initiative was that the Ministry will observe International Volunteer's Day - annually.