

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE AND
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**



**A n n u a l R e p o r t
2007**

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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.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific States
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
COTED	Council for Trade and Economic Development
CRNM	Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery
CSME	Caribbean Single Market and Economy
EU	European Union
OAS	Organisation of American States
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ministry during the year under review has been persistent in its quest to safeguard Guyana's economic and trade interest at the different negotiating fora as well as build upon its relationship with its bilateral partners.

FOREIGN TRADE

During the reporting year, the Ministry was engaged in consultations with the relevant stakeholders on the inevitable erosion of the LOME preferential trade engagements under the Cotonou Partnership Agreement with the European Union. Also 2007 has been a phenomenal year for Guyana in the area of Trade in Services.

Sugar Protocol: The Ministry continued to collaborate with stakeholders of the sugar industry and the European Union to safeguard its benefits under the Sugar Protocol and increased access in the successor arrangements that would evolve out of the Economic Partnership Agreement with the European Union. Representation was also made for the timely release of funds under the EC/ CARIFORUM Rice Competitiveness Project. Apart from the extra-regional markets, representations were also made at the CARICOM level to ensure that barriers to trade are not imposed on our exports and to ensure that Guyana market share is not eroded.

Economic Partnership Agreement Negotiations (EPA): During 2007 MOFTIC in consultation with key government and private sector agencies, advanced Guyana's preparation for the EPA negotiations, and successfully undertook awareness sessions on the EPA negotiations in the different Administrative regions of Guyana targeting particularly the business community.

Notwithstanding difficulties on both sides, (ACP and EC) negotiations were completed and initialed in December 2007. This marks a new phase in the economic and trade relationship with the European Union which is expected to enter into force effective January 1, 2008.

External Negotiations: On the external negotiating front, the World Trade Organization, despite setbacks and lack of convergence on many critical issues in the reviewing year, still continued its mandate under the Doha Development Agenda to work towards progressive liberalization and reform of trade policies. An overview of the state of play is: Market Access in Agriculture and Non-Agriculture Market Access remained the most controversial areas of the negotiations and although the release of draft texts by chairs of

both Committees some vital areas of particular interest to developing countries were at an impasse.

Services: One of Guyana's paramount priorities during the reviewing year was to focus more on this growing sector, as the awareness of the potential benefits of this sector filter down into the mainstream of the economy. Thus, a sector which once seem as small and insignificant to the national economy, has become very attractive in the realisation that it could be the answer, once given proper attention, to an economy that has been hit by international reforms in the sugar and rice sectors.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Much has been done in the area of International Cooperation to mobilise financial and human resources for Guyana and also source various forms of Technical Assistance, largely through Technical Cooperation projects and Joint Commission meetings.

In 2007, Guyana received foreign assistance for the funding of several project proposals which were submitted by Government agencies for consideration and the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation facilitated visits by some high level delegations to discuss what forms of Technical Assistance should be offered to Guyana and also to agree on proposals for mutual cooperation which would be beneficial to other countries.

In order to ensure that projects were successfully implemented, this Ministry facilitated visits by foreign personnel who were equipped with special skills for those work sites where construction were undertaken during project implementation and this contributed to the transfer of knowledge and techniques, in addition to contributing to the proper installation of sensitive equipment.

Joint Commission meetings continued to be the medium for discussing project proposals and arriving at consensus, for the implementation of projects.

The deputation of experts to work in public sector agencies was also welcome in 2007 and as a consequence of the presence of those experts, there was capacity building, in addition to the execution of the specific activities for which the experts were recruited.

In addition, Guyana was afforded a number of training opportunities in 2007 and several workshops/seminars, as distinct from training programmes, conducted overseas.

In conclusion, the Ministry had a productive year in 2007, with some very significant achievements in the area of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2007

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN TRADE

1.0 MULTILATERAL TRADE RELATIONS

1.1. Conclusion of the CARIFORUM-EC Negotiations for an Economic Partnership Agreement(EPA).

2007 was an especially critical year in terms of the external trade negotiations in which Guyana was involved. The LOME Preferential Trade Arrangements under the Cotonou Partnership Agreement with the European Union expired on December 31, 2007. These arrangements were not renewable and Guyana and the other member states of the Caribbean Community were committed to negotiate with the EU a WTO-compatible Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) to enter into force on January 1, 2008, in order to secure and enhance the LOME preferential arrangements on a permanent basis.

In keeping with the commitment of the ACP and the EC in the Cotonou Partnership Agreement (Article 37.1) to negotiate WTO-compatible Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) by December 31, 2007, the CARIFORUM Group – CARICOM and the Dominican Republic - and the EC launched their negotiations in Jamaica in April 2004. The negotiations were concluded on Sunday, December 16, 2007 in Barbados with the first full EPA signed between an ACP regional grouping and the EC in advance of the December 31, 2007 deadline. The EC will apply the EPA provisionally from January 1, 2008, and CARIFORUM will be allowed until April 15, 2008 to commence provisional application.

Under the EPA, Guyana's LOME trade preferences – including sugar and rice – as well as market access in non-goods areas such as services, investment and intellectual property are secured and strengthened.

Rice: Market access for Caribbean rice into the EC will be on a full duty-free quota-free (DFQF) basis from January 1, 2010. During the transition period from 2008 to 2009 duty free rice quotas for the Caribbean rice exporters (Guyana and Suriname) will be increased to the following amounts, without any restriction to the type of rice: 187,000 metric tonnes in 2008 and 250,000 metric tonnes in 2009.

Sugar: An additional quantity of 30,000 mt has been extended to the Caribbean Sugar Protocol countries up to September 2009 when the Sugar Protocol expires. The current Caribbean Sugar Protocol (SP) exporters (Belize, Guyana and Jamaica) will share this additional quantity.

With respect to reallocation of supply shortfalls up to the end of the Protocol in September 2009, the EC has agreed to consider the reallocation of Caribbean shortfalls to other Caribbean exporters, within the Protocol rules. Ordinarily, re-allocation of shortfalls is decided on an ACP-wide basis.

1.1.1 Public Consultations

2007 was a crucial (final) year for CARIFORUM countries, including Guyana, in terms of providing the chief negotiators with timely and substantive inputs on the various areas emerging for a draft text of the Economic Partnership Agreement (consolidated offers and requests on market access in goods and services, and other trade-related areas), as well as to defend their economic interests. The capacity of Guyana's trade representatives to provide inputs into the regional negotiation process also depended on the inputs provided by the private sector.

During the month of May 2007, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation (MOFTIC) and the National Advisory Committee on External Negotiations (NACEN) in collaboration with the European Commission (EC) organised a series of public awareness/consultation seminars with private sector groups across the country to update them on the state of play in the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations. This initiative was supported by the ACP-EU funded trade capacity building project that aims to promote greater private and public sector dialogue on trade issues.

The overall objective of the project was the strengthening of the contribution and participation of Guyana in the ongoing Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations through increased public awareness and stakeholder support at a time when the Caribbean Region was engaged in the final phase of the negotiations with the EU.

While the Ministry had conducted several public discussions on the EPA, since the launch of the negotiations in April 2004, the 2007 outreach initiatives paid particular attention to stakeholder groups located outside of Georgetown. This served to improve the ability of the private sector representatives throughout the country to better understand the implications of the EPA trade arrangements and its relation with the Cotonou Partnership Agreement and the ongoing WTO negotiations. Consultations were held in West Demerara, Anna Regina, Georgetown, Central & Upper Corentyne, New Amsterdam, Lethem and Linden.

1.1.2 The EU Sugar Reforms and Compensation Package

The ACP's 10th Ministerial Conference on Sugar was held in Fiji from April 30-May 3, 2007. The Conference focused on the development of strategies for managing the challenges posed by the reforms in the EU sugar sector to the ACP sugar industries and the EC's market access offer (on Sugar) in the context of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations.

On December 4, 2007, the EU paid the first tranche in the amount of US\$5 million (3.27 million euros) to Guyana in the Sugar Reform Compensation Package. This assistance is intended to support Guyana's reform of the sugar industry under the EC Accompanying Measures Package and Action Plan that has taken into consideration Guyana's long term growth and development, the sustainability of the industry, diversification and the economic, social and environmental impacts of restructuring the industry. The funds have been realized more than two years after the 36% sugar price cut by the EU on ACP sugar. The second tranche of US\$44 million is expected in 2008.

1.2. World Trade Organization (WTO) Negotiations

In the WTO Doha Round Negotiations, there was limited progress on the Doha Work-programme since Hong Kong 2005, and in particular on full modalities especially in Agriculture and Non-Agriculture Market Access (NAMA). This situation led to the suspension of talks in July 2006 but full-fledged negotiations resumed in January 2007. At an informal meeting at the level of Heads of Delegation on November 30, 2007, the WTO Director-General, in his capacity as Chair of the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC), outlined a process for completing the talks in 2008. The TNC Chair also considered putting the modalities in place for Agriculture and NAMA as the gateway to concluding the Round since this would open with three components that could run in parallel: scheduling Agriculture and NAMA, tabling final offers and scheduling services, and finalizing the other rule-making parts of the negotiations.

On March 12-13, 2007 the Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation, in his capacity as CARICOM's Ministerial Spokesperson on WTO Matters, participated at a high-level international Seminar in India entitled "Saving Doha and Delivering on Development". The Seminar was attended by all the major players, including the WTO Director-General.

The Minister advocated CARICOM's position, since negotiations have restarted, it was no longer sufficient or acceptable for WTO members to merely reiterate commitment to a

development dimension in the negotiations. The Doha Round should not be allowed to conclude without a clear understanding and well defined commitments on the matter. Though essential, trade liberalisation and reform of the trade rules for the Caribbean are but one part of the process of development. CARICOM Trade Ministers undertook to advance this approach in the context of the 'Development Vision' which the Conference of Heads of Government recently adopted for the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).

1.2.1 Meeting with the WTO Director-General

On April 13, 2007 CARICOM Trade Ministers convened in Special Session in Kingston, Jamaica to meet with the Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO), Mr. Pascal Lamy, to discuss the state of play in the Doha Round Negotiations and the special concerns and interests of the region. The Director-General's visit to the Region was undertaken against the background of the mandate of CARICOM Heads of Government for the Region's Trade Ministers and negotiators to intensify their advocacy of the region's special concerns as small vulnerable economies.

Following the resumption of the Doha Negotiations in Geneva at the end of January 2007, CARICOM Heads of Government, at their 18th Intersessional Meeting in St. Vincent & the Grenadines on February 12-14, 2007, agreed inter alia that the Region should:

- (i) continue to be actively engaged in the negotiations at all levels to ensure that issues of interest to the Region are taken on board; and
- (ii) review its position in light of any new developments that emerge and strengthen its diplomatic efforts bilaterally with its existing alliances (such as ACP, Small Economies and G33) as well as other groupings with a view to better securing its interests.

1.2.2 Trade in Services Negotiations

In May 2006, the Government of Guyana through the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation (MOFTIC) requested the technical assistance of the USAID Guyana Trade and Investment Support Project (GTIS) for a study of the Guyana services sector to inform and guide the participation of the Government in the external negotiations on services.

The study was undertaken against the backdrop of Guyana's active participation in the various external negotiations in the WTO Doha Round, the CARIFORUM-EU Economic

Partnership Agreement (EPA) and the CARICOM-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement.

The activity was deemed a high priority in Guyana's ongoing preparation and participation at both the regional and multilateral levels, in light of the urgent need for delegations to undertake impact assessments and advance appropriate proposals (requests/offers) in the various negotiations. National consultations and field research were conducted with the government, the private sector, the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM) and the Guyana Coalition of Service Providers.

In March 2007, the Ministry received from the USAID GTIS Project a Services Sector Study entitled *"Guyanese Services: Opportunities for Increased Economic Growth and Trade Liberalization"*.

1.2.3 Commonwealth Secretariat Project on Professional Services

During the period August 2006 to May 2007, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Government of Guyana executed a services sector project aimed at the development of an action plan and strategy for the export promotion of professional services in Guyana in the context of the overall diversification of Guyana's economic base. The project centered on developing the capacity of local professionals to take advantage of trade opportunities opening to them through trade agreements such as the EPA, in light of the general tendency towards increased trade liberalization and the erosion of longstanding preferences. For services exports to increase, the capacity of Guyanese services providers to access international markets must clearly be enhanced.

The Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation worked closely with the Guyana Coalition of Service Providers (GCSP) on the project which focused on the legal, accounting, auditing and book-keeping, taxation, architecture, engineering, medical and dental and veterinary services. Two stakeholder workshops were held in February and May 2007 to discuss the draft findings and finalise the Draft Report.

1.2.4 Aid for Trade Regional Review for Latin American and the Caribbean

Following the launch of the Aid for Trade (AFT) initiative at the Sixth Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong in December 2005, three regional review meetings for "Mobilising" AFT were held in the in three different geographical areas: Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and Africa in the latter part of 2007. These review meetings were followed by the first Global Review at the WTO Secretariat in Geneva in November 2007.

The Ministry participated in the Aid for Trade Regional Review for Latin America and the Caribbean that was held in Lima, Peru in September, 2007. It was the first of the three high level regional reviews organized by the WTO Secretariat. The main objective was to discuss how to build the capacity and infrastructure that countries need to take advantage of and connect to today's dynamic global economy and how best to utilize trade more effectively as a tool for economic development, job creation and poverty alleviation.

It is expected that the outcomes of these reviews will inform further work at both the multilateral and national levels, as well as among donors, in 2008 in the development of strategies and action plans towards building the capacity needed of small developing countries to expand trade and to effectively integrate into the world economy. In addition to action at the member state level, CARICOM will also work with its members to identify regional priorities for project support.

2.0 CARICOM REGIONAL TRADE ARRANGEMENTS

2.1. Audit of the Supply Capacity and Demand for Cement in the Region

The regional trade in building cement has been a topical issue on the COTED Agenda as far back as the 11th Meeting of the COTED in May 2001. Member States throughout the region have complained persistently about the inability of the regional supplier, Trinidad Cement Limited (TCL), to meet the growing regional demand for building cement.

At the 18th Regular Meeting of the COTED in 2005, it was mandated that a comprehensive examination of the production and trade in Cement in the Region and an examination of the operations of TCL be conducted. The CARICOM Secretariat, with financial support from the Commonwealth Secretariat's Hub-and-Spokes Project, commenced the execution of the independent Audit of the Supply Capacity and demand for Cement in the Region in November 2007.

Two regional consultants, recruited by the CARICOM Secretariat, visited Guyana from November 29-December 1, 2007 and met with representatives of the Ministries of Tourism, Industry and Commerce; Public Works and Communication; and Housing and Water. The Consultants also met with the various importers, distributors and the TGI Cement Plant representatives. The full results of the Audit are expected to be presented to the COTED in early 2008.

3.0 CARICOM BILATERAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

3.1. 2nd CHINA-CARIBBEAN Trade and Economic Cooperation Forum

During September 6-12, 2007, Guyana was represented by a (12) twelve member delegation comprising Government and private sector representatives at the 2nd Meeting of the Guyana/China Joint Business Development Council, the 2nd China/Caribbean Trade and Economic forum, the 2nd China/Caribbean Business Forum and the China International Fair on Investment and Trade which were held in Xiamen, China.

CARICOM and China concluded a framework agreement which will guide China-Caribbean trade and economic relations for the next four (4) years. China offered to depute experts in the fields of agriculture and (Chinese) languages to CARICOM member States countries and ¥4 billion RMB Yuan concessional loan for the implementation of bilateral cooperation projects.

During the Forum, an Agreement for Technical and Economic Cooperation was concluded and a Grant for ¥20 million RMB Yuan was offered for the implementation of bilateral cooperation projects between Guyana and China. The Grant provided is expected to be utilized mainly for the implementation of the ferry vessels project.

4.0. JOINT BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS

4.1. Guyana/China Joint Business Development Council

MOFTIC facilitated the visit of a (7) seven member team from the Chinese side of the Joint Council to Guyana. The Contingent represented the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) and was in Guyana from September 21-24, 2007.

The Chinese sides of the Joint Business Development Council, the CCPIT and MOFTIC have initiated a web-broadcast of all the services and products offered by Guyanese businesses to be placed on the Chinese website for possible Chinese investment and other export interests.

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

The Department of International Cooperation worked closely with bilateral partners and multilateral institutions in order to agree on economic, social and technical programmes aimed at mobilizing critically needed resources. 2007 has been a very challenging year for the Department in light of the decision of several bilateral and multilateral partners to decrease their budgetary support for technical cooperation and the increasing trend to move towards cost sharing with beneficiaries' recipient entries.

1.0 BILATERAL COOPERATION

1.1 CHINA

1.1.1 Visits by High Level Chinese Delegation

A High Level Chinese Delegation led by Madam Gu Xiulian visited Guyana during the period July 9-11, 2007. The delegation had fruitful consultations with H.E. President Jagdeo as well as other Government functionaries on issues related to technical cooperation, trade, developmental and other matters of mutual interest in the international fora. The Following agreements were also concluded during the delegation's visit to Guyana:

- Protocol on Debt Write-Off
- Memorandum of Understanding to Facilitate Travel by Chinese Tourist Groups to Guyana

1.1.2 Chinese Medical Brigade

A Chinese Medical Team from the Jiang Su Province visited Guyana in June 2007 and had consultations with the Ministry of Health for the possible expansion of the Chinese Medical Brigade and on a long-term sustainable housing plan for the members of the brigade. A Memorandum of understanding was concluded between the Georgetown Hospital Corporation and the Chinese Medical Delegation. The MOU will facilitate the construction of an apartment building complex for the medical brigade on the principle of shared cost between the Guyanese and Chinese sides.

1.1.3 Guyana Green Farm

Guyana Green Farm Inc. was able to construct about 15 green houses for the purpose of cultivating vegetables. Among the vegetables grown are local and Chinese varieties. The

vegetables produced are being sold on the local market. The company also has plans for exploring the potential for the export Market.

1.1.4. Ferry Vessel Project

On September 07, 2007, an Exchange of Notes was concluded between the Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation and H.E. Zhang Jungao, Chinese Ambassador to Guyana, to facilitate the dispatch of a Chinese Survey Team to Guyana to carry out a feasibility study on the manufacturing of ferry vessels in Guyana. The Chinese Team visited Guyana and met with officials of the Ministry of Public Works and Communications and representatives of prospective shipyards for consultations and information gathering.

1.1.5 Debt Write-Off

A Protocol on Debt Write Off was signed on July 10, 2007 between the Minister of Finance and H.E. Zhang Jungao, Chinese Ambassador to Guyana. According to the Protocol, the Chinese Government has written off six (6) tranches of loans to the tune of ¥107,206,060.43 Renminbi Yuan and £610,000 GBP owed by the Government of Guyana.

1.1.6 Deputation of Geologists

The Agreement for the dispatch of two (2) Chinese geologists to work in Guyana for a period of three (3) years was concluded on January 15, 2007 between the Chairman of the Board of the Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC) and H.E. Zhang Jungao, Chinese Ambassador to Guyana. In August 2007, the two geologists arrived in Guyana to commence their tour of duty. The geologists assisted GGMC with regional geochemical survey, technical advice and providing training to local geochemical technicians.

1.1.7 Guyana International Conference Centre (GICC)

On January 30, 2007, the Exchange of Notes for the dispatch of a team of six (6) Chinese technicians and administrators to Guyana to give technical guidance on the operation and maintenance of the equipment at the GICC and to train the Guyanese staff on management, reception and service was concluded. The shipment of furnishings for the GICC, to the amount of ¥3.7 RMB Yuan, arrived in Guyana in February with a team of six Chinese technicians to install the furnishing. In March 2007, the other technicians and administrators arrived in Guyana and provided guidance and training to the GICC staff for a period of six (6) weeks.

1.1.8 Memorandum of Understanding to Facilitate travel by Chinese tourists to Guyana

On July 10, 2007, the MOU to facilitate travel by Chinese Tourist groups to Guyana was concluded between the Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation and H.E. Zhang Jungao, Chinese Ambassador to Guyana during the visit by the Chinese High Level Delegation led by Madam Gu Xiulian.

1.1.9. Deputation of Chinese Youth Volunteers

The Ministry has requested the deputation of a second batch of youth volunteers to come in Guyana for a period of one year.

1.1.10. Skeldon Sugar Modernization Project

The Skeldon Sugar Modernization Project continued throughout 2007.

1.1.11. Training Courses

The Chinese Government offered over 100 (fully funded) technical training courses for the 2007 fiscal year. A total of 30 Guyanese Officials benefited from the training programmes offered by the Chinese Government in the various disciplines.

1.1.12. Table Tennis Coach

The Exchange of Notes for the deputation of one Table Tennis Coach and one Interpreter was concluded between the Hon. Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation Dr. Henry Jeffrey and H.E. Zhang Jungao, Chinese Ambassador to Guyana on June 14, 2007. The Agreement facilitated the deputation of the coaching team to Guyana for the duration of one year. The coaching team arrived in Guyana in December 2007 to commence their stint with the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports.

1.2.0 JAPAN

1.2.1 New Amsterdam Hospital Project

The Ministry of Health in December 2007 submitted an application for Follow-Up Grant Aid to address the defects of the New Amsterdam Hospital for the Japanese 2008 fiscal year. This application was forwarded to the Japanese Embassy in Port of Spain for the consideration and approval of the relevant Japanese Authorities.

1.2.2 Training Courses

In 2007, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation received invitations for public sector officials to attend in Japan.

In November 2007, the Public Service Ministry identified 20 areas of training for the 2008/2009 fiscal year, and this information was communicated to the Japanese Embassy in Port-of-Spain.

1.2.3 Japanese Non-Project Grant Aid

On January 24, 2007, a meeting was convened with the Implementation Committee for Japanese Non-Project Grant Aid and representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Finance, the Crown Agents, the Japanese Embassy in Port of Spain and end users, to discuss the progress of implementation and the challenges in the implementation process.

The Ministry of Finance has indicated that as of December 5th, 2007, G\$260,835,000, has been deposited by End Users into the counter value funds account at Bank of Guyana. That Ministry has also signaled its intention to utilize the entire Non-Project Grant (US\$4.2M) on Drainage and Irrigation and not include electricity supply as was previously indicated.

1.2.4 Corriverton Potable Water Supply Project

Construction work for Phase I of the Corriverton Potable Water Supply Project commenced in February 2007, and should be completed in the first quarter of 2008.

The Exchange of Notes for the implementation of Phase II of the project was concluded on June 25, 2007 during the H.E. President Jagdeo's State Visit to Japan. Under this project, two water treatment plants will be constructed by the Japanese Government to the tune of US\$6M, and approximately 50,000 residents in the Corriverton area and its surrounding environs would stand to benefit from receiving potable water supply upon completion of this project.

1.2.5 Japanese General and Fisheries Grant Aid

Several Government agencies submitted the following project proposals for consideration under the Japanese General and Fisheries Grant Aid:

- Study for the establishment of a Deep Water Port & Modern Container Terminal in Guyana

- Assessment & Management – Performance & Condition Assessment.
- Training for Ranks and the Acquisition of Equipment for the Guyana Fire Service
- Rehabilitation of the East Demerara and Boerasirie Water Conservancies & Flood and Water Control of the Mahaica and Mahaicony Areas
- Air Navigation Services Modernization Project

1.2.6 Dispatch of Japanese Senior Volunteers to Guyana

During H.E President Bharrat Jagdeo's state visit to Japan in June 2007, a request was made for the services of Senior Japanese Volunteers under the Guyana/Japan Technical Cooperation Agreement to serve within the social sectors in Guyana.

A team of officials from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) visited Guyana during the period November 30 to December 06, 2007 and met with potential beneficiary agencies to assess the posts and working environment for the volunteers and also to assess local medical care facilities.

The Ministries of Health and Agriculture were earmarked to benefit from the dispatch of senior volunteers in the first instance as these areas were assessed priority areas. It was also decided that in this initial phase, the volunteers would be deputed for a period of up to six months with the possibility of extensions

The Japanese Team met with the Ministries of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation, Health, Agriculture and Human Services and Social Security among other agencies. The Team also visited the Georgetown Hospital, Diamond Diagnostic Centre and St. Joseph Mercy Hospital.

1.2.7 Grant Assistance for Grass Roots Human Security Projects

Mr. Hori, a Consultant for Grassroots Projects visited Guyana from March 5th-6th 2007., and met with officials from NGOs as well as representatives from the Ministry of Health to explain the criteria and process for applying for Grassroots Assistance.

In this regard, MOFTIC requested the Ministries of Health, Amerindian Affairs, Human Services and Education to encourage agencies under their Ministries to submit proposals for funding under the Japanese Grassroots Projects.

1.2.8 Regional Projects

On November 28, 2007, a preparatory study team from the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) visited Guyana and met with local agencies in relation to the implementation of Phase II of the Caribbean Disaster Management Project. Phase II would also include Dominica, Belize, St Lucia and Grenada. Phase I of this project was executed in Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago.

The Caribbean Institute for Metrology and Hydrology (CIMH) of the University of the West Indies in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago will also work together with CDERA, to establish pilot sites in each of the participating countries and :

- Establish an early warning systems for floods
- Develop hazard maps
- Establish a hydrological database and;
- Provide support for community based disaster management.

Once a pilot site has been established, the JICA will work in conjunction with the Civil Defense Commission to execute this project and it is expected that the project would commence in July 2008 and will run for a period of three years.

1.3.0 INDIA

1.3.1 Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme

The Department of International Cooperation facilitated requests for eleven (11) ITEC Experts, for deputation to the following Agencies and Ministries: Guyana Revenue Authority, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Home Affairs and National Communications Network (NCN).

1.3.2 First Indian-Latin America Partnership Conclave.

The first Indian-Latin American Partnership Conclave was held in New Delhi, India February 13- 15, 2007. Guyana was represented by the Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce.

This initiative presented an opportunity for India to forge links with the Latin American and Caribbean region with respect to pharmaceuticals and biotech, transportation, ICT, agri-business, energy, media and entertainment, tourism and hospitality and healthcare.

1.3.3 Solar Photovoltaic Water Pumps

Five Solar photovoltaic water pumps were received as gifts from the Government of India. These pumps have been installed and activated, in the following regions:

- St. Cuthbert's Mission Region 4
- Kato, Region 8
- Sand Creek, Region 9
- Yupukari, Region 9
- Aishalton Region 9

1.3.4 Fourth Session of the Guyana/India Joint Commission

Preparations for the Fourth Session of the Joint Commission commenced in 2007.

1.3.5 Line of Credit

The Government of Guyana has submitted project proposals to the Indian Government for a Line of Credit to be utilized for the construction of two (2) Sports facilities in the counties of Essequibo and Berbice at the cost of US\$ 5m each and the creation of an ICT Park/Village.

Against this background, two Indian technical teams visited Guyana to present the proposals to the potential beneficiary agencies and to have consultations aimed at finalizing the implementation of the projects.

1.4.0 REPUBLIC OF KOREA

1.4.1 Korean Grant Aid

In August 2007 Guyana submitted applications to the Korean Government for the supply of equipment to the Ministry of Tourism Industry and Commerce, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Agriculture to the tune of about US\$200,000 under the Korean Grant Aid in 2007/2008 fiscal year.

1.4.2 CARICOM/KOREA Consultations

In May 2007, the first CARICOM/KOREA Consultations was held at the CARICOM Secretariat Headquarters in Georgetown, Guyana. CARICOM member States supported Korea's candidature to host World Expo 2012 and at the same time requested assistance from the Korean Government for CARICOM's E-Government Project.

Korea's Non-Resident Ambassador to Guyana during his visit to Caracas in September expressed his gratitude to the Caribbean Community for its support for Korea's candidature to host World Expo 2012. Consultations were also held with the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation and the Ministry of Health on cooperation initiatives.

1.5.0 NIGERIA

1.5.1 Technical Aid Corps Programme

In 2007, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation continued to monitor the work of the five (5) Nigerian Technical Aid Corps volunteers, who were deputed to Guyana in April 2006. The Ministry also facilitated the visits of Nigerian Officials who worked closely with the volunteers and requests from the Ministry of Housing and Water and the Ministry of Agriculture. The CVs of the prospective volunteers were forwarded to the relevant Ministries for selection.

1.6.0 BARBADOS

1.6.1 Guyana/Barbados Joint Commission

The Inaugural Session of the Guyana/Barbados Joint Commission on Economic, Technical and Cultural Cooperation was convened from 17-18 October, 2007 in Georgetown, Guyana.

Presentations by both sides were focused on deepening bilateral cooperation between the two sister countries in the areas of trade, investment, marine affairs, tourism and hospitality, air services, education, agriculture, sports, culture and youth affairs, immigration, security and legal services, culture, youth and sports.

It was agreed that the Commission would meet biennially alternately between Georgetown and Bridgetown while the various sectors would meet on a needs basis. Both sides were also able to agree on a work programme for implementation during the next two years.

1.7.0 COLOMBIA

1.7.1 Third Session of the Guyana/Colombia Joint Commission

Under the framework of the Third Session of the Guyana/Colombia Joint Commission, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation facilitated the implementation of a Spanish Course for Public Service Officials which was convened during August –September 2007 in Georgetown. The Spanish Course was aimed at enhancing the knowledge of Public Service Officials in the Spanish language with a view to facilitating fuller participation in the regional integration process involving South American Countries.

1.8.0 CUBA

1.8.1 Guyana/Cuba Joint Commission

In 2007 there were one hundred (100) Cuban medical experts in Guyana. Also Cuban Specialists in the areas of Archives and Hydrometeorology were deputed to Guyana during the period August 8 - 27, 2007.

On December 18, 2007, a Cuban taxidermist, Mr. Marcos Antonio Olcha Cordero arrived in Guyana, under the technical cooperation programme agreed to at the 23rd session of the Guyana/Cuba Joint Commission. Mr. Cordero was deputed for a six month period and would be attached to the National Museum.

1.8.2 24th Session of the Guyana/Cuba Joint Commission

Preparation for the 24th session of the Guyana/Cuba Joint Commission and the inaugural session of the Guyana/Cuba Joint Business Council commenced in 2007.

1.9.0 BRAZIL

1.9.1 Guyana/Brazil International Road Transport Agreement

According to ANTT's resolution 1923, of 28 March 2007, published in the "Diário Oficial" on April 2, 2007, the Government of the Federative Republic Brazil declared Bonfim an International Port of Entry. The declaration of Bonfim as an International Port of Entry promises to improve trade relations and increase the movement of people between the border communities on both sides.

1.9.2 Convening of the Extra-Ordinary Session of the Guyana/Brazil Commission on the International Road Transport Agreement

Two Extra-Ordinary Sessions of the Guyana \ Brazil Commission on the International Road Transport Agreement were convened between Government Officials from Guyana and Brazil to deliberate on Insurance; Customs; Immigration; Transportation; Agriculture and Health matters for the implementation of the aforementioned Agreement. There was also an exchange of information and official documents which are to be used to facilitate cross border trade and the movement of passengers across the border.

Additionally, Officials from Guyana Revenue Authority (Customs) and Receita Federal (Customs) of Brazil met in Boa Vista during December 11-12, 2007 to discuss outstanding matters pertaining to Customs facilitation between Guyana and Brazil for the implementation of the International Road Transport Agreement and inauguration of the Takatu Bridge in early 2008.

1.9.3 Outreach visit to Lethem

The Minister of Foreign Trade & International Cooperation, and a team of Officials from relevant Government agencies and the private sector visited Lethem, Region Nine (Upper Takutu/ Upper Essequibo) during the period 19-21 April 2007.

The objective of the visit was to update the residents of Region # 9 on important matters related to regional and international trade. Participants were informed of Guyana's external trade negotiations in the WTO Doha Round, Economic Partnership Agreement Negotiations and the Guyana/Brazil trade relations. Emphasis was placed on the economic and social benefits which could be derived from these arrangements.

1.9.4 Guyana – Brazil Trade Relations

The Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation (MOFTIC), the Embassy of Brazil and the Private Sector Commission jointly organized a Workshop and Business Seminar on "How to Export to Brazil", in Georgetown on June 27 - 28 2007.

The Workshop was aimed at strengthening Guyana /Brazil Trade Relations and Guyana's export capabilities under the Guyana-Brazil Partial Scope Agreement. Government Officials, Manufacturers and Exporters were provided with the necessary information on a number of issues including customs regulations, sanitary and phytosanitary requirements, insurance, investment opportunities in Guyana and other issues.

1.9.5 National Coordinating Committee (NCC)

The Eighteenth Session of the NCC along with one Special Session of the NCC were convened to discuss and agree to subject matters pertinent to cross border activities between Guyana and Brazil. Among the issues discussed were the Takatu River Bridge, the construction and maintenance of the Brazilian/Lethem road, the implementation of the Guyana-Brazil International Road Transport Agreement, the Extra-Ordinary Session of the Guyana/Brazil Commission on the International Road Transport Agreement and the Multi-Purpose Complex.

2.1.0 MULTILATERAL COOPERATION

2.1. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

2.1.1 Donation of Computer Systems from WIPO

In January 2007, WIPO informed the Government of Guyana that it would donate two computer systems to the Deeds Registry in an effort to assist with the automated registration of trademarks, patents, etc. Quotations were submitted to WIPO by the Deeds Registry.

2.1.2 Technical Working Group on IP

On February 22, 2007 the Technical Working Group on IP, convened a meeting to discuss new developments in IP, the outcome of the WIPO Regional Ministerial Meeting and the status of updating Guyana's IP legislations.

2.1.3 Inter-Regional Intermediate Seminar on Industrial Property

An Inter-Regional Intermediate Seminar on Industrial Property was convened during the period June 6-8, 2007 in Geneva. Guyana was represented by Mr. Narewhwar Harnanan, from the Ministry of Legal Affairs, who received practical training at one of WIPO's partner institutions in Europe.

2.1.4 WIPO's Meeting for Experts in Traditional Knowledge and Folklore

In relation to the WIPO's Meeting for Experts in Traditional Knowledge and Folklore, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) was tasked with developing a

framework aimed at setting out the legal, practical, administrative and institutional aspects necessary for a regional system for the protection of Traditional Knowledge and expressions of folklore against misappropriation

In this regard, the Hon. Dr. Desrey Fox, Minister within the Ministry of Education and Mr. Ronald Cumberbatch, Project Director of the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs were selected to represent Guyana at this meeting which is scheduled for March 2008.

2.1.5 Regional Ministerial Level Meeting on Intellectual Property for Caribbean Countries

WIPO is undertaking to conduct a study to examine the various regional systems in relation to patents, which currently exist and consider alternative approaches for the Caribbean.

In this regard, a consultant is expected to visit countries in the region to look at their IP systems and how they function. Guyana is among the countries selected for phase I of this project and a visit by the consultant, Mr. David Barford, is scheduled for January, 2008.

3.1.0 COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT

3.1.1 Request for Water and Sanitary Engineer

The Government of Guyana requested assistance from the Commonwealth Secretariat for the provision of a Water Engineer and a Sanitary Engineer to assist the GOG in the post flood reconstruction phase. These requests were approved by the Commonwealth Secretariat and technical experts were identified and their CVs forwarded to the relevant agencies by Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation.

3.1.2. Request for Legal Draftsman

In an effort to effect much needed legislative amendments to Guyana's Traffic Laws relating to ticketing, radar guns, tint and breathalyzers, Marriage Act, Immigration Act, Criminal Offences Act, and Citizenship, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation facilitated a request to the Commonwealth Secretariat made by the Ministry of Home Affairs for a Legal Draftsman to assist in this regard.

3.1.3 Request for Master Tailor

The Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation has sought the assistance of the Commonwealth Secretariat for the provision of a master tailor to conduct upgrading workshops for established tailors.

3.1.4 Commonwealth Secretariat Caribbean SME-ICT Programme

Two (2) consultants from the Commonwealth Secretariat visited Guyana during the period March 14-23, 2007 and conducted preliminary preparations for the implementation of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Pan-Caribbean SME- programme.

The consultants met with local stakeholders from the banking and micro-financing sectors as well as private sector agencies, and drafted a discussion paper based on the SME Strategy Development Project.

One of the consultants Mr. Robert Fournier, visited Guyana a second time during the period May 21-25 2007 and met with local stakeholders who were part of the initial consultation process to discuss the draft paper.

3.1.5 SME Network Brokers & Facilitators

The second phase of the Pan-Caribbean SME-ICT Competitiveness Development Programme being undertaken by the Commonwealth Secretariat and which involves regional training for "SME Network Brokers and Facilitators" took place from June 18 to June 21, 2007 in Barbados.

3.1.6 Commonwealth Secretariat's Strategic Plan for the Development of MSME in Guyana

Consultant Mr. John Edgar, from the Commonwealth Secretariat visited Guyana from May 31-June 5, 2007 to conduct consultations with the relevant stakeholders. The Ministry of Tourism Industry and Commerce is the focal point for SMEs in Guyana.

4.1.0 ORGANISATION OF AMERICAN STATES.

4.1.1 Training

The Organization of American States under its Multilateral Fund of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (FEMCIDI 2007/2008) programme has awarded funding to two project proposals submitted by the CARICOM Secretariat and the University of Guyana. With regards to the CARICOM Secretariat, the project is "A Strategy for the Professional Preparation of Instructors/Teachers for the Delivery of Primary Level Enhanced Spanish Curriculum".

New Project Proposals for the project cycle 2008/2009 were received from the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC) and the Ministry of Education.

4.1.2 Voluntary Service Overseas

The Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation facilitated the placement of volunteers from the Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO), on behalf of the Government of Guyana in the Education, Agricultural and Health sectors. Some NGOs were also able to benefit from the attachment of VSO volunteers.

4.1.3 International Volunteer Day (IVD) 2007

The Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation in collaboration with local and international voluntary organizations organized and convened activities under the theme "Volunteer Now – Partner for Change", to mark the observance of International Volunteers Day 2007 during the period November 28 to December 12, 2007. Activities such as lecture sessions, parade, NGO Forum Showcase and the Main Event (activities acknowledging volunteerism in Guyana) were held over a two-week period during November 28 to December 12, 2007.

5.0 STAFFING

In 2007 three (3) Technical Officers were recruited to work in the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation while one (1) Officer resigned to take up residence overseas.