Dear Fellow Nationals,

On November 1, 2007 our beloved nation commemorates 26 years of national independence. For those of us living abroad, independence celebrations usually evoke sentiments of patriotism and national pride. As we prepare for this year’s celebration I entreat you to further demonstrate your nationalistic devotion by answering the noble call to serve. Antigua and Barbuda is blessed with stable democratic institutions, a highly educated workforce and unprecedented economic growth. However, increased competition among countries with emerging markets will make it increasingly taxing to maintain a competitive advantage. To counter this threat Antigua and Barbuda needs more skilled professionals and entrepreneurs to keep our institutions robust and economy strong.

Our nation should not make the same mistakes that others have in the past by failing to recognize and tap the wealth of knowledge and skills of their nationals living abroad. Adding more professionals to the country’s workforce will improve employee discipline and increase productivity. Nationals living in the Diaspora have acquired experiences in professional work and entrepreneurship. Their working environments place lofty value on workforce discipline and high productivity. Hence it is to our nation’s benefit to exploit their competencies to improve discipline and productivity in both the private and public sectors. Without productivity enhancement and improved employee discipline economic gains may become meaningless.

To avoid this pitfall competencies and workforce values from the Diaspora must be transferred back to Antigua and Barbuda and sooner rather than later. Hence it is to our nation’s benefit to tap the wealth of knowledge and skills of their nationals living abroad.

The recent appointment of Her Excellency Louise Lake Tack as our nation’s first female Governor General suggests that finally there is some acknowledgement that the Antigua and Barbuda Diaspora is rich in skill-sets and competencies the nation needs in order to move beyond modernization-station toward full development-rank. Furthermore, the Governor General’s administrative center has always been somewhat vague to many overseas nationals in terms of its executive and broader societal role. The reflective visibility the office has received as a result of this recent appointment can help to illuminate its factual role in embodying and preserving our democratic ideals.

One of those salient ideals is that of state power checks and balances. The Governor General presides over the swearing-in of the prime minister and other cabinet ministers. The Governor General ensures that Antigua and Barbuda has a prime minister and functioning government in place. If the prime minister is no longer able to serve the Governor General is responsible for the continuity of government. The Governor General also summons Parliament, sets out the government's program by reading the Throne Speech and signs official documents and meets regularly with the prime minister and government officials.

Her Excellency Louise Lake Tack exemplifies the loyal spirit that embodies the Antigua and Barbuda Diaspora. Indeed, her appointment breathes new life into a vision that has eluded too many in the past. Let us hope that many more overseas nationals will be given the opportunity to serve our nation. Many may not wish to return home to work, however they can perform virtual service. Technology is available that can transfer the skills and competencies of the Diaspora back to Antigua and Barbuda.

The 20/20 Caribbean Conference held in June underscored the need for policymakers to recognize and exploit the wealth of expertise and capital in the Diaspora. This wave of interest shown by Caribbean heads of state in the Diaspora should not be allowed to wither but should continue to grow. My staff and I appreciate the expression of interest by Antigua and Barbuda nationals residing in the Northeast. It is our belief that Antigua and Barbuda stands to gain much when the path is cleared and the Diaspora retorts to a call to serve.

McChesney G. Emanuel
Hon. Consul General

A CALL TO SERVE
INDEPENDENCE GREETINGS

PRIME MINISTER
THE HONOURABLE W. BALDWIN SPENCER

INDEPENDENCE MESSAGE TO OVERSEAS NATIONALS

I bring you warm greetings and best wishes from the Government and People of Antigua and Barbuda. On November 1, we celebrate our 26th Anniversary of Independence and as we celebrate this milestone I implore you to let our festivities reflect this year’s independence anniversary theme: “Antigua and Barbuda as one family - aspiring, advancing and achieving.”

Independence is an occasion when all citizens at home and in the Diaspora should celebrate and give thanks to almighty God for all our nation’s triumphs. Indeed we have a lot of reasons to be grateful to God as a nation. Our 26th year of independence is celebrated at a time when our nation enjoys strong economic growth and stability. Our economy grew at 12% last year and a 7% increase in GDP is expected in 2007. Our national debt is decreasing and revenues are increasing, thanks to our government’s well-disciplined fiscal policy. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is on the rise and the local business sector and entrepreneurs are demonstrating full confidence in the government’s approach to managing the country’s economy. Such unprecedented economic growth and stability have engendered feelings of optimism and hope at home and respect and trust abroad.

While we at home enjoy the benefits of this economic expansion we must be mindful of the contributions our overseas nationals make in keeping our economy strong and sustaining our relatively high standard of living. Your remittances add significant value to Antigua and Barbuda’s economy and the nation also benefits greatly from your skills and expertise.

My government also understands the important role education plays in the development of a nation. Those nation states that invest in education are better equipped to contest the challenges associated with attainment of sustainable development. We exist in a highly competitive global economy that is driven by innovation and information technology. Hence, through endeavors of my administration over two hundred (200) young men and women have been awarded scholarships in a variety of disciplines to study abroad. After graduation it is our hope that most of these graduates will return home to practice their skills. It is also our intention to create the necessary opportunities to ensure our most gifted return to Antigua and Barbuda to serve.

In addition to making education a priority, we have embarked upon an extensive reconstruction road program. It is our belief that a sound infrastructure is a critical component in the schema of sustainable development.

The government of Antigua and Barbuda remains resolute in its quest to make our schools, roads, seaport, airport, healthcare delivery and telecommunication systems the most modern and efficient in the Eastern Caribbean. Today, Antigua and Barbuda is highly recognized throughout the region and within international organizations. Our election to the Chairmanship of the G-77 and China grouping of the United Nations commencing January 2008 is further testimony of the esteem in which our beloved Antigua and Barbuda is NOW being held.

My fellow nationals, twenty-six years of independence has brought us some challenges but many accomplishments. Indeed it is an opportune time to exude our national pride and love of country. Let this year’s patriotic celebrations serve to inspire us all to work together as one family to build a more just, peaceful and prosperous Antigua and Barbuda.

I wish all my fellow Antiguans and Barbudans in the Diaspora a peaceful and festive 26th independence anniversary. May God bless you and our beloved Antigua and Barbuda!

W. Baldwin Spencer
Prime Minister
COMMUNITY EVENTS

COMMUNITY GROUPS
Quarterly Calendar

October 27th, 2007
Dem Boyz And Girlz Of All Saints Inc.
First Annual Dinner & Dance
Venue: Maestro’s Caterers
1703 Bronxdale Avenue, Bronx, NY
Donation: $80 single/ $155 couple
Contact: (347) 432-1956 or (347) 524-5270

November 11, 2007
Antigua Progressive Society
73rd Anniversary Service
Venue: St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church (127th & 5th Avenues)
Reception following at Antigua House
Contact: 646-702-9112

December 1, 2007
Parham & Pares of Antigua & Barbuda USA Inc.
Annual Dinner/Dance
Venue: Maestro’s Caterers
1703 Bronxdale Avenue, Bronx NY
Music by: Vision Band
Cost: $75 per person
Contact: 718-731-4173/718-918-1840

December 8, 2007
Children of Freetown
17th Annual Dinner/Dance
Venue: Eastwood Manor, Bronx (Off Eastchester Road)
Music by: Vision Band
Cost: $70 per person
Contact: 718-379-2631/718-464-8040

GOVERNMENT OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
Hon. McChesney G. Emanuel
Consul General of Antigua & Barbuda - NY and Staff
cordially invite you to the
Independence Thanksgiving Service
Commemorating the
26th Anniversary of Independence
Sunday, October 21st, 2007
4:00 pm
Salem United Methodist Church
2190 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd.
(129th Street & 7th Avenue)
New York, NY 10027
Sermon by: Rev. Stafford Byers
(Brooklyn Temple of Seventh Day Adventists)
Reception following in the Church Hall
For more information call: 212-541-4119

NEW DATE

Consulate General of Antigua & Barbuda - NY

2007 TOY AND GIFT DRIVE
Monday October 22 through Friday November 30
Donate a new unwrapped educational
toy or a new reading book for children ages 4-16

DROP OFF LOCATIONS:
Bronx
St. Luke’s Episcopal Church
777 E 222nd Street
(Barnes Ave. & 222nd St.)
Bronx, NY 10467
718-882-3060

Brooklyn
Emmanuel Deliverance Temple
693 Ralph Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11212
(by Sutter Ave. & East New York Ave.)
718-756-5644

Manhattan
Consulate General of Antigua & Barbuda
305 East 47th Street, Suite 6A
New York, NY 10017
(by 1st & 2nd Avenues)
646-215-6043/5/7

Long Island
St. George’s Episcopal Church
319 Front Street
Hempstead, NY 11550
(by Washington & Main St.)
516-483-2771

Put a smile on the face of a needy child in Antigua and Barbuda
this holiday season!
IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Antigua and Barbuda welcomes a new Governor General
Mrs. Louise Agnetha Lake-Tack

Hundreds of Antiguans and Barbudans gathered for a special sitting of Parliament on Tuesday July 17, 2007 to witness the swearing-in ceremony of Mrs. Louise Agnetha Lake-Tack, the first female Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda and the second Antiguan and Barbudan to hold this prestigious position.

Her Excellency Mrs. Louise Lake-Tack is Antiguan and Barbudan by birth. She was educated in Antigua and Barbuda at the Freetown Primary School and the Antigua Girls High School. In an effort to advance herself Her Excellency migrated to the United Kingdom where she pursued studies in nursing at the Charring Cross Hospital. Following her studies, she was employed at the National Heart Hospital and the Harley Street Clinic. After a number of years, Mrs. Lake-Tack gave up her nursing career to take care of her family.

Upon her children attaining adulthood, Mrs. Lake-Tack attended a number of educational institutions. These include City of Westminster College, Thames Valley University, the Open University, Holborn Law School and the Council of Legal Education to study for the bar.

Mrs. Lake-Tack has served as a magistrate since 1995 at both Marylebone and Horseferry Magistrate Courts. She also sat at Pocock Street Crown Court and Middlesex Crown Court to hear appeals from the lower courts.

Outside her legal and medical career, Her Excellency has contributed to a wide range of church and national association activities in the United Kingdom, which have been of significant benefit to Antigua and Barbuda. She has been a member of the Antigua and Barbuda National Association (London) for the past twenty-four (24) years. She sat on the church committee of that group which was instrumental in arranging the annual Antigua and Barbuda Independence Church Service in London. As a member of the Antigua and Barbuda National Association (London), she helped to raise funds for hurricane victims in Antigua and Barbuda as well as for the St. Phillip’s Anglican Church which was devastated by hurricane Luis in 1995.

Mrs. Lake-Tack is also very passionate about the education of our young people and for many years she has been providing funding for the private education of a number of children in Antigua and Barbuda. She is a devout member of the Anglican Church and has worked as a qualified Christian counselor at her local church “All Souls,” London.

Her Excellency has served in roles that draw on her interest and considerable knowledge in international affairs. One such role was as a former member of the Anti-Apartheid Movement for which she helped to raise funds for the educational arm of that movement.

In her remarks at the swearing-in ceremony, Her Excellency said, “This will remain an unforgettable and uplifting experience in my life and indeed the life of all women in Antigua and Barbuda.” She also extended herself to all Antiguans and Barbudans as she remarked, “Today I offer you my hand, and I say to you, that should you ever find yourself in need of a word of advice, a little word of comfort- solace, my door will always be open and you’ll never be turned away- never!”

As Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer noted, “Antigua and Barbuda is indeed fortunate that there are individuals of such distinction and integrity who are prepared to accept the role of Governor-General and carry out its duties and responsibilities.”
PM Spencer Addresses United Nations
as he prepares to take up the Chairmanship of the G-77

Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda the Honorable Winston Baldwin Spencer on Friday 28th September addressed the 62nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly calling on leaders of the world to recommit themselves to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the stipulated period. It is the second time the Prime Minister addressed the United Nations since assuming office in 2004.

During his address, the country’s leader called on all nations to work towards a fairer international system which is in response to the needs of all countries and people. He said, “there is a role to be played by all nations, large and small, including a firm resolve to strengthen the multilateral system, to correct systemic imbalances that hinder the achievement of the MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals. Systemic imbalances in international trade, finance and international governance keep millions locked in poverty; and millions in a perpetual state of insecurity because they remain underrepresented.”

Prime Minister Spencer further remarked, “It should therefore come as no surprise that Antigua and Barbuda is of the view that small states can, and should play a crucial role by being the voices of reason, the voice not shackled to dogmatic positions which power necessitates. The absence of so-called “high power” allows small states to be pragmatic and practical in coming up with solutions to some of the most pressing international problems.”

The Prime Minister’s address to the General Assembly, which was witnessed by a small group of Antiguans and Barbudans from New York and New Jersey, also praised the United Nations for its role in ensuring that the Anniversary of the abolition of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade is observed. He said that “the slave trade must not be a forgotten crime against humanity, and as members of the family of humanity the onus is on us all for this not to happen. The Trans-Atlantic slave trade and slavery represent the greatest horror in the history of mankind, yet it has never been adjudicated.”

PM Spencer added, “The international system should remain focused on the legacy of slavery and the slave trade because it provides the opportunity to carry forward the fight for justice. With all the modern treaties and international statutes and recognition of the slave trade as a crime against humanity, this crime remains unpunished; the entities remain unaccountable for their participation and profiteering.”

The country’s leader who will assume the Chairmanship of the G-77 also highlighted a number of areas that will be the focus of his chairmanship. These include Financing for Development, Reform of the United Nations and Sustainable Development: Climate Change/Biodiversity.

During his five-day visit to New York, Prime Minister Spencer also addressed a plenary session on Financing the Response to Climate Change – Investing in Tomorrow. During that session he noted that climate change as a threat to security of island-states is a major impediment to achieving sustainable development. He also addressed the need for financing implementation at the national level. Prime Minster Spencer remarked, “It’s one thing to set up a fund, but another for the monies to reach projects that make an impact in the country. The latter is not happening enough to make a difference. Simply put, if we are to implement national climate change action plans it requires money, technical assistance and training and educating our own local people on strategies for dealing with Climate Change.”

Prime Minister Spencer’s agenda in New York also included a meeting with the Polytechnic University scholarship students from Antigua and Barbuda, a reception with potential investors and a host of bilateral meetings with friendly countries.

The Honorable Prime Minister was accompanied to New York by Minister Trevor Walker, Ambassador Sir Ramez Hadeed and Ambassador to Japan Anthony Liverpool.
IMMIGRATION MATTERS - PART TWO

Antigua and Barbuda Passports
TWENTY (20) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How often do I need to renew my Antigua & Barbuda Passport?
The Antigua and Barbuda Passport is valid for ten (10) years for an adult and five (5) years for children 16 years and under.

2. What is the cost to process the passport?
The cost is US$90 for adults and US$40 for children 16 years and under, plus an additional US$30 for FedEx fees. The Consulate General only accepts CASH for the courier fees (if submitted in person) and MONEY ORDERS for the passport fee. Personal checks and credit cards are NOT accepted. Money orders are made payable to the “Government of Antigua and Barbuda”.

3. How long does it take to process a passport?
Because all passport processing is done at the passport office in Antigua, generally it takes 6 to 8 WEEKS from the date your application is approved to be completed.

4. Where can I apply for an Antigua & Barbuda passport?
Applications can be processed through the consulates in New York, Miami, Canada or the embassy in Washington, DC. Applications can also be submitted in person at the Antigua and Barbuda Passport Office.

5. What documents do I need to present if I am an adult applying for a passport for the first time?
Original birth certificate (and baptismal certificate where applicable), completed application form (certified by an official), three (3) photographs (one of which should be certified by the official who signed the application form).

6. What do I need to present in order to renew my passport?
Original birth certificate, expired passport, completed application form (certified by an official), three (3) photographs (one of which should be certified by the official who signed the application form).

7. Who can certify the application form and photograph?
A notary public must certify the application where indicated and the same notary must stamp and sign one (1) photograph. The notary’s embossing seal should not be used on the photograph.

8. What steps should I take in the event that my passport is lost or stolen?
Report the loss to the nearest police precinct and then contact the Consulate General of Antigua and Barbuda.

9. What documents should I present along with the application for a lost or stolen passport?
Official police report, birth certificate (and baptismal certificate where applicable), completed application form (certified by an official), three (3) photographs (one of which should be certified by the official who signed the application form).

10. What is the cost to replace a lost or stolen passport?
The cost is US$180 for adults and US$80 for children 16 years and under, plus an additional US$30 for FedEx fees. The Consulate General only accepts CASH for the courier fees (if submitted in person) and MONEY ORDERS for the passport fee. Personal checks and credit cards are NOT accepted.

11. How long will it take to receive a replacement of a lost or stolen passport?
Processing time will vary in the case of a lost or stolen passport. Ample time must be given to the passport office in Antigua and Barbuda as well as the other necessary authorities to investigate the claim.

12. If I am a married woman, what documents should I present to renew my passport?
Original marriage certificate (with apostille where applicable), birth certificate, expired passport, completed application form (certified by an official) and three (3) photographs. Married men need not present marriage certificates.

13. What is an apostille?
Documents issued in one country (i.e. the United States) that will be used in another country (Antigua and Barbuda) must be “authenticated” or “legalized” before they can be recognized as valid in the foreign country. An apostille is a process in which various seals are placed on the document. Such documents range from powers of attorney, affidavits, birth, death and marriages records, incorporation papers, deeds, patent applications, home studies and other legal papers.

14. How do I obtain an apostille?
All birth and death records originating from the five boroughs of New York City (Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island) must be certified together with a Letter of Exemplification by the New York City Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Records,
125 Worth Street, New York, NY 10013. The original document must then be presented to the County Clerk’s Office in the county where the document was obtained to verify the signature on the Letter of Exemplification. The document can then be presented to the New York State Department of State for authentication.

All marriage records originating from the five boroughs of New York City (Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island) must be obtained from the Marriage Bureau, Municipal Center, 1 Centre Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10007. Obtain a certified copy of the marriage certificate with an original signature of the City Clerk. The document must then be presented to the County Clerk’s Office in the county where the document was obtained to verify the signature of the City Clerk. The document can then be presented to the New York State Department of State for authentication.

All birth, death, marriage and divorce records issued outside of the five counties of New York City can be obtained from the New York State Department of Health, Certification Unit, Vital Records Section, P.O. Box 2602, Albany, NY 12220-2602. The document can then be presented to the New York State Department of State for authentication.

Birth, death, marriage and divorce records issued outside of the five counties of New York City may also be obtained directly from the local registrar or town clerk of the city, town or village where the birth, death, marriage or divorce occurred. The original document must then be presented to the county clerk’s office in the county where the document was obtained for certification. (It is suggested that you contact the county clerk’s office prior to obtaining the records to determine if their office can certify documents obtained from a local authority.) The document can then be presented to the New York State Department of State for authentication.

New York City Office - The document, together with the $10 fee, may be mailed to the Department of State, Certification Unit, 123 William Street, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10038. The country where the document is being sent must be specified. The telephone number is (212) 417-5684. You may also bring your document to the New York City Office for processing between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Processing documents submitted by mail is usually completed within 2 to 4 business days. To assist in processing your document in a timely manner, you may wish to include a daytime telephone number so that you can be contacted should any questions arise. Documents may be submitted in person at the office above. Processing a document submitted in person is usually completed while you wait.

Each document submitted to the Department of State for authentication must be accompanied by a $10 fee. Please make the check payable to the “New York State Department of State”.

15. How do I add my married name to my machine readable passport?
If you already hold a machine-readable passport, your married name CANNOT be added to that passport. In order for your married name to be included, you will have to apply for another machine-readable passport, supplying your marriage certificate (and apostille where applicable) along with the other required documentation. This will be treated as regular processing, and will take a minimum of 6 to 8 weeks.

Handwritten amendments (addition of married name) are no longer made to the old format passport. In order for your married name to be included you would have to apply for a machine-readable passport.

16. What documents should I present if I am a divorced woman and wish to keep my married name?
Original divorce decree or marriage certificate (with apostille where applicable) along with the birth certificate, expired passport, completed application form (certified by an official), three (3) photographs, one of which should be certified by the certifying official who signed the application form.

17. Is my child eligible to receive an Antigua & Barbuda passport?
A child or grandchild of an Antiguan and Barbudan national is eligible to hold a passport by descent. Applicants by descent must submit an original birth certificate (with apostille where applicable) and an original birth certificate for his/her parent or grandparent to prove descent. A copy of the bio-data page(s) of the child’s passport must also be presented for verification.

18. Can I hold more than one passport?
Yes. Antigua and Barbuda recognizes persons who bear more than one passport. [N.B. When a “dual citizen” enters the US, he/she is expected to identify himself to US immigration and customs officials as a US citizen (not as a citizen of another country) -- and in cases where a passport is required to enter the US, a dual US/other citizen is expected to enter on a US passport (or other valid entry document), just like any other US citizen].

19. Can I travel anywhere in the world with the old format passport although the new machine-readable passports are now being issued in Antigua and Barbuda?
Yes. All countries around the world have been advised by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda that the old format and the new machine-readable passports are equally valid for travel anywhere in the world. Due notice will be given when any decision is taken to withdraw the old format passport.

20. Where can I get additional information on applying for the passport?
The application form and other requirements can be downloaded from the Government website www.ab.gov.ag or through the link on the New York Consulate General website www.congenantigua-barbuda-ny.org.

CONSULATE NEWS visit our website: www.congenantigua-barbuda-ny.org
26th Anniversary Independence Celebrations Schedule of Events

Sunday 21st Oct.  Thanksgiving Service 4 p.m.  St. John’s Cathedral

Monday 22nd Oct.  Literary Arts Awards & Presentation 7:30 p.m. Museum

Tuesday 23rd Oct.  Senior Citizens Program 9:30 a.m.  Multipurpose Centre
Pre-Jubilation Gospel Concert 5 p.m. Heritage Quay

Wednesday 24th Oct.  National Youth Rally 8 a.m.  ARG Schools Steel Band Competition 6 p.m. ARG

Thursday 25th Oct.  Trade Show Arts & Craft Exhibition 9-5 p.m.
Festival of Choirs – 7:30 p.m. Spring Gardens Moravian Church

Friday 26th Oct.  Theatrical Presentation – 8 p.m. Cathedral Cultural Centre

Saturday 27th Oct.  Independence Queen Show 8 p.m. ARG

Sunday 28th Oct.  Barbuda Service 9 a.m. Holy Trinity Church
Jubilation Gospel Concert 4 p.m. – until Antigua Recreation Grounds

Monday 29th Oct.  Folksong Festival - 8 p.m. Cathedral Centre

Tuesday 30th Oct.  Calypso Awards Night

Wednesday 31st Oct.  National Dress Day/Tree planting Dance Festival 8 p.m. Cathedral Cultural Centre

Thursday 1st Nov.  Ceremonial Parade 8 a.m. ARG
Food Fair 10 a.m. - until Independence Banquet

November 01 Antigua & Barbuda Independence Day
November 22 Thanksgiving Day – US
November 23 Day after Thanksgiving Day
December 10 Heroes Day
December 25 Christmas
December 26 Boxing Day

HOLIDAYS OBSERVED

November 01 Antigua & Barbuda Independence Day
November 22 Thanksgiving Day – US

CONSULATE NEWS
Consulate General of Antigua and Barbuda – NY
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6th Floor
New York, NY 10017
Phone: 212-541-4119
Fax: 646-215-6009

visit our website: www.congenantigua-barbuda-ny.org