



**Post-Cabinet Statement**  
**March 12, 2007**  
**Delivered by Prime Minister Douglas**

Today I am very pleased to bring the very first post Cabinet briefing, which is being designed really to enhance our thrust in increasing our Democracy by way of increasing transparency and accountability as we pursue good governance in St. Kitts & Nevis. In the future, either myself as the Minister of Information or my Minister of State in the Ministry, Hon. Nigel Carty, will bring the Cabinet press briefing.

Firstly the Cabinet reviewed the weekly report of the progress of preparation that the country is making for hosting the Cricket World Cup matches later this week and through the next few weeks. Cabinet has high praises for the private citizens and corporate bodies of St. Kitts & Nevis who have responded very magnanimously and graciously to the call to join the public sector in demonstrating our national pride and to put country above self in the hosting of the six CWC matches to be played at the brand new stadium at Warner Park here in Basseterre, St. Kitts.

The Cabinet echoed the exclamations of residents and visitors alike who speak of the extraordinary transformation that has taken place in the spectacular beautification of downtown Basseterre. Cabinet in particular commended the Ministry of Works, Public Utilities and Transport, and of course the private sector for the successful completion of the Basseterre downtown beautification project on time and within budget.

Cabinet now, it looks forward, to the security forces, the hundreds of proud volunteers and citizens of St. Kitts & Nevis, to make the visitor experience most spectacular and Cabinet also saluted the volunteers and security forces for their total commitment to duty and service over the next two weeks.

We also as a Cabinet today, Monday the 12<sup>th</sup> of March, adopted the national action plan of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. This involves the development of a relevant national action programme for combating desertification and land degradation in our beautiful country of St. Kitts & Nevis. To this end Cabinet approved the following: firstly the appointment of a steering committee to take this national plan forward; 2, the community participation and consultation with key stake holders and interest groups was also approved by the Cabinet; and thirdly, the involvement and the endorsement by the national planning and natural resources management agencies of St. Kitts & Nevis.

A third group of matters looked at by the Cabinet today involved the Cabinet's continued support for the start up of new businesses especially small and micro enterprises and



growth, development and expansion of existing businesses here in St. Kitts. Cabinet approved a number of submissions granting incentives to these businesses by way of import duty concessions. Most of these businesses are in support of the services sectors that are now driving our new exciting, progressive economy that is services oriented. These new businesses particularly provide support services to tourism and hospitality and the thrust and consciousness of our citizens towards healthier lifestyles.

A fourth group of matters looked at by the Cabinet today concerned our viewing with alarm the following matters: the illegal occupation of crown lands or squatting by citizens of St. Kitts & Nevis; 2, the illegal removal of head stones and encouraged vandalism of the built infrastructure of our sugar heritage, that is, we've noted the continuing vandalism of our chimneys, our mills, and our old stone buildings, which remain on our sugar estates; thirdly, we also viewed the recent spate of cane fires, which we understand have been politically motivated.

We have made a very strong appeal to the public to desist from such destructive acts and Cabinet has approved the creation of a quick response demolition team in answer to those who continue to ignore the warning notices from the Department of Physical Planning and Environment and the Development Control and Planning Board. These two entities will pursue this matter most vigorously in order to safe guard the patrimony of the citizens of St. Kitts & Nevis.

This really finally, is the last matter as I conclude the very first Cabinet briefing as we try to establish greater accountability and transparency in government in pursuance of good governance and the strengthening of our Democracy. Thank you.