



Government of St. Kitts & Nevis
Cabinet Secretariat, Government Headquarters
Church Street, Basseterre
St. Kitts & Nevis

Post-Cabinet Statement August 8, 2007

Good evening to citizens of St. Kitts and Nevis. I bring to you the post-cabinet briefing for Cabinet meeting held today August 8, 2007. Today's brief cabinet meeting was intended to address a few important matters only.

Budget Preparation and Management

Cabinet received a contingent from the Ministry of Finance, headed by the Financial Secretary, Mrs. Janet Harris, who was supported by Deputy Financial Secretaries Mr. Calvin Edwards and Ms Sylvia Manning, and Mr. Vinton Chinsee, a consultant from ECEM, the Eastern Caribbean Economic Management Programme.

The officials from the Ministry of Finance updated Cabinet on a project that is designed to improve the government's fiscal and budget management position. The project, undertaken in collaboration with ECEM (the Eastern Caribbean Economic Management Programme), is designed to further enhance government transparency in budget allocation and accountability through performance budgeting and to in the final analysis improve public service delivery.

One of the aims of the project is to increase Parliament's role and participation in outlining public finance strategies and in setting priorities for the public budget. The culmination of the activity now undertaken will increase social and economic development in improving the quality of public service delivery to the population. The improved budgeting procedure will augment the quality of the budget estimates and facilitate more coherent short term and long term planning.

The increased transparency resulting from the process will provide the basis for public dialogue involving major stakeholder groups on a variety of issues impacting the economic and social evolution of the Federation. In addition, individual ministries of the government will accede to greater autonomy in the management of financial resources but there will be increased accountability since ministries must now engage in more



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proactive national goals-oriented planning and will have to justify their use of public funds having regard to the broad objectives they set for themselves. Ministries will be required to perform multi-year planning on programmes which are designed to impact the broad goals of the government such as poverty reduction, economic development led by Tourism, Agriculture and Financial Services, and improving wellness and security.

The software system that will be installed on the culmination of the project will streamline the budget control process and automatically generate official budget presentation documents. The system will allow for planning and reporting at varying levels of detail to facilitate a more diverse range of stakeholders.

Cabinet was satisfied that the project will address some long-existing concerns with regard to the budget planning and management process. The government welcomes the new tool which will allow for greater transparency and heightened public involvement in the budget planning process.

This project is one of many initiatives that the government is involved in to improve the fiscal situation of the country.

Other Matters

Cabinet also discussed the progress with the electoral reform process and is satisfied that the process is on track. Cabinet was advised that the Parliamentary Advisory Electoral Reform and Boundaries Committee is to meet shortly to consider the report of the Archibald Committee (or the National Advisory Electoral Reform and Boundaries Committee) to make practical final recommendations for the government and Parliament to consider. After this exercise, therefore, depending on the recommendations, new laws will be drafted to govern the electoral process in the Federation.

The End

This brings to an end the post-cabinet briefing for Cabinet meeting held today Wednesday August 8, 2007. Thank you for listening.