



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

Post-Cabinet Statement August 27, 2007

Citizens and residents of St. Kitts and Nevis, good evening. I bring to you the post-Cabinet briefing for Cabinet meeting held today Monday August 27th, 2007. In this package, I update you on decisions taken with regards to:

1. the new land distribution policy
2. our bio-energy initiatives
3. cost of living control
4. Post-sugar closure activities
5. The development of new ICT legislation
6. The new school meals programme

The Land Distribution Policy

Cabinet expressed satisfaction with the launch of the special land initiative which took place at the Circus on Friday August 24. The Special Land Initiative is designed to provide 5000 citizens of St. Kitts and Nevis with a first time opportunity to own land at a reasonable cost. Land under the special Land Initiative is being sold for \$4.95 for amounts of land up to 4000 square feet. However, citizens can access up to 9000 square feet of land under this special programme. Citizens abroad are also invited to make their applications. The application form can be accessed online at www.gov.kn.

The public is also reminded that the NHC land distribution programme has now been improved to address the needs of persons in the lowest income bracket. Persons earning less than \$1500 a month would be entitled to purchase land under the new NHC programme for just \$3.00 per square foot. This new price of \$3.00 also applies retroactively to any land purchased at NHC any time in the past where the purchase price was higher than \$3.00. Persons who are still paying for land at NHC should take note of this new reduced price and engage NHC as soon as possible. Lands that have been paid off for cannot fall under this dispensation.



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

Bio-energy Initiatives

In discussing the high cost of energy and the need to diversify the energy sector and reduce cost, Cabinet discussed the ongoing initiatives of the government to develop renewable energy sources. Cabinet was updated on the two analytical reports which have been produced by the OAS and Professor Albert Binger of Jamaica. These two reports discuss in full detail the options that St. Kitts and Nevis need to examine in pursuing the development of new sources of fuel such as ethanol, biomass and wind energy, to reduce our dependency on gasoline. Cabinet therefore applauded the Ministry of Sustainable Development and the Ministry of Public Utilities for organizing the stakeholder consultation that is to be held at the OTI on Tuesday 28th August. The meeting draws together a number of stakeholders to discuss in full detail the options for the development of renewable energy in St. Kitts and Nevis. Out of the workshop, tangible, practical recommendations would be made to address the development of the renewable energy sector.

Cost of Living Control

Cabinet received a full update from the Minister of Consumer Affairs on the implementation of the new price control policy. The Minister indicated that he had had discussions with members of the business community and had come to a good sense of what levels of reduction would be needed to appreciably reduce the cost of living to the benefit of the poor while simultaneously ensuring that small businesses in particular can continue to operate profitably.

Rates for the new price control scheme are soon finalized and it is expected that by mid-September the policy will be fully developed and implemented.

Activities Following Closure of the Sugar Industry

The Minister of Agriculture brought an update to the Cabinet on his ongoing meetings with former sugar workers. The government continues to monitor the progress of the



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

former sugar workers since the closure of the Sugar Industry and to design programmes that fit their needs.

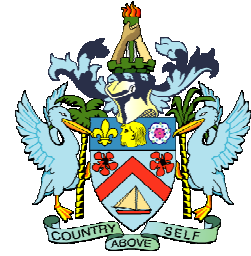
After discussing the state of affairs of the SSMC railway, the Government commissioned a feasibility study and technical assessment to determine the development potential of the railway for expanded tourist services, and for freight and commuter services. At the same time, the government has taken measures to protect the railway from vandalism and erosion.

The Ministry of Agriculture has recently acquired a number of juicers (juice extraction machines) from the Republic of China (Taiwan) which will be distributed to ex-sugar workers around St. Kitts who will become involved in agro-processing. This programme is geared towards the development of new enterprises and the empowerment of local people. The overall aim is to ensure that agro-processing become a viable economic activity in the country and contribute towards the strengthening of our national food security.

New ICT Legislation

Last November, as part of the thrust to develop the Information and Communications Technology sector, Cabinet approved a new ICT strategic plan that will guide the development of the entire ICT sector. The ICT plan was developed through the collaboration of the government and private sector entities. Cabinet discussed the implementation of the plan including the building of the ICT centre on the Industrial Estate in Basseterre.

After some discussion, cabinet approved the creation of legislation to support the development of the ICT sector. The specific legislation to be created and introduced eventually are the Data Protection Act, the Electronic Transactions Act and the Computer Misuse Act. The objectives of these laws are to promote the use of electronic information, facilitate the use and legal recognition of electronic signatures, protect computerized systems from unauthorized access, and to secure personal data protection.



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

Improved School Meals Programme

Cabinet received a full report from the committee that was charged a few weeks ago to review the school meals programme. The report provided recommendations for the improvement of the school-feeding programme. The new feeding programme is designed to incorporate a variety of healthier foods to support a balanced diet and to improve taste. In particular, peas and beans, natural fruit juices, meat varieties, and vegetables will comprise the new menu which will now rotate on a four week basis instead of a weekly basis.

The new school-feeding programme which will be implemented for the new school term will benefit 5250 primary school children and will cost approximately \$128,000 per month.

The End

This brings to an end the post-cabinet briefing for Monday August 27, 2007.