



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

Post-Cabinet Statement September 3, 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 September 3rd, 2007. The Cabinet meeting was chaired by the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister.

Consumer Protection and Fair Trading

Today, Cabinet held discussions on the ongoing work to implement the new price control mechanism that is to come on stream later this month, September, under which scheme a number of essential food and non-food items will have their prices regulated so that these products can be more affordable to the wider population, particularly the poor. In addition, members discussed plans to implement the new consumer affairs framework that was approved back in May of 2005. The objectives of the framework are to implement consumer protection mechanisms, to promote fair-trading, and to make recommendations for the introduction of legislation to support and sustain the process. Specifically, in order to engage in monitoring and compliance matters that will become necessary when the new price control mechanism is operationalised, Cabinet approved the allocation of the necessary financial resources to retain a number Compliance Officers in accordance with the framework.

Amendment to the Education Act

In 2005, a new Education Act came into being as an attempt by the government to modernize the education system taking into account the present realities in our society, while building upon the strengths of the existing system at that time. The new Act, in particular, gave specific definition to the roles, responsibilities, rights and privileges of students, teachers, parents, school administrators and the Minister of Education and other stakeholders relating to the education of the child. Today, cabinet approved for the Education Act to be amended in the following ways:

1. Convicted sex offenders are to be debarred from ever holding teaching positions



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2. Guidance counselors and their roles and functions are to be specifically defined in the amended Act
3. Penalties are to be introduced for certain offenses that have been defined in the Act, but for which no penalty was specified.

It is expected that these amendments to the Education Act will be made at the next sitting of Parliament planned for late September. Cabinet reiterated its commitment to further improving the education system so that increasing numbers of students can benefit from high quality education and that the human resources necessary for our nation's development in increasingly challenging times can be effectively nurtured. The success of the education system over the years since the introduction of universal secondary education in 1975 was discussed.

Duty Concessions

In keeping with its commitment to support local businesses and the development of the tourism sector in particular, government reviewed, discussed and approved a number of concessions for small local hotels and other similar enterprises. These concessions were given in accordance with the Hotels Aid Act which empowers the government to consider the economic impact of Hotels and related businesses and to assist in and facilitate the development of the tourism sector by providing certain fiscal concessions. Government is aware that the tremendous development that has taken place in the country over the last 12 years is due to such proactive policies of assistance to businesses in all sectors of the economy.

Standing Committee for Duty Free Stores Policy

In January of this year, government implemented a new policy for duty free stores in the country. The new policy introduced two main classes of duty free stores – class A and Class B, it identified duty free zones, and it listed the goods to be approved for duty free importation.



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Since the introduction of the policy, a number of issues have been raised by stakeholders, mainly concerning the list of goods to be approved in accordance with the policy. Cabinet has therefore approved the creation of a standing committee consisting of members from the public and private sectors to review the present concerns, to make recommendations relating to these concerns, and to act as a monitoring agency for the duty free policy over the medium to long term.

The End

This brings to an end the post-cabinet briefing for Monday September 3, 2007.