
Commonwealth Business Forum

23 - 26 November 2009

Royal Caribbean *Serenade of the Seas* Cruise Ship
Trinidad & Tobago



CBC

Promoting
Global Trade and Investment
for Shared Prosperity

INFORMATION PACK

Commonwealth Business Council
18 Pall Mall
London SW1Y 5HL, United Kingdom

July 2009

VENUE

The Commonwealth Business Forum (CBF) will be held from 23 to 26 November 2009 on the cruise liner, *Serenade of the Seas*, which will be docked in the Port of Spain Harbour (adjacent to the Hyatt Regency Hotel and the International Financial Centre) during CBF.

Boarding and Registration will take place on **Monday 23 November 2009** from 14:00hrs on board the *Serenade of the Seas*.

CONFERENCE PACKAGES

The Conference Packages include access to all sessions, one-to-one meetings, all conference documentation, breakfast meetings, conference lunches and dinners and accommodation on the *Serenade of the Seas* for the nights of the 23rd, 24th and 25th November 2009.

Residents of the ship, will however, be responsible for all alcoholic beverages consumed at any time and all non-alcoholic beverages consumed outside of meal services.

OPENING CEREMONY

The Opening Ceremony will be held on the *Serenade of the Seas* on **Tuesday 24 November 2009**. Please be seated by **08:45hrs latest** – *thank you!*

GALA EVENTS

There will be two Gala Dinners and one Gala Lunch which will take place on board the *Serenade of the Seas*.

Tuesday 24 November

Reception and Gala Dinner: The Commonwealth and the Americas
Keynote Address: Hon Patrick Manning, Prime Minister, Trinidad & Tobago

Wednesday 25 November

Reception and Gala Dinner: Partnering for a more equitable and sustainable future
Keynote Addresses: Heads of State and Government

Thursday 26 November

Gala Lunch: Trading for a more equitable and sustainable future
Keynote Addresses: Heads of State and Government

Dress code: Formal dress (not Black Tie) or National Dress

GENERAL INFORMATION

ARRIVAL

Piarco International Airport is the port of arrival in Port of Spain.

BANKING & CURRENCY

Banks are open from 8.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. on Monday to Thursday and from 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and 3.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. on Friday. The main banks are Republic Bank, RBTT Bank Ltd., Scotia Bank, First Citizens Bank, Citibank, Intercommercial Bank and Bank of Baroda.

Cash dispensing machines are widely available. Banking services will be available to the media in the International Financial Centre, which will house the Media Centre and is adjacent to the Hyatt Regency Trinidad. Major credit or debit cards are widely accepted (with the exception of American Express). Most hotels and the *Serenade of the Seas* accept major credit and debit cards. If you do not own one of these, please carry cash.

Most internationally recognised currencies and travellers cheques can be exchanged at commercial banks, hotels' Forex Bureaux (bureaux de change) and at the Piarco International Airport.

The national currency of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is the Trinidad and Tobago Dollar. The approximate exchange rates in June 2009 are US\$1 = TT\$6.30; UK£1 = TT\$10.30; Euro 1 = TT\$8.83 and EC\$1 = TT\$2.34.

BUSINESS AND SHOPPING

Government offices are open from 8.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. Monday to Friday.

Shops are open from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. Monday to Friday and 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. on Saturday. Shopping malls are open from 10.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. Monday to Saturday.

Most businesses, including shopping malls and plazas, are closed on Sundays and public holidays. Supermarkets and some pharmacies are the exception.

CLIMATE

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago has a tropical climate and is warm all year round, with daytime temperatures averaging 31 degrees Celsius (87degrees Fahrenheit), while nights average 21 degrees Celsius (69 degrees Fahrenheit). There are two main seasons, a dry season from January to May and a rainy season from June to December.

DRIVERS' PERMITS

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago recognises valid driving permits of Commonwealth countries as well as International Driving Permits. They must be carried when operating a motor vehicle.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

The power supply is 110-120V, 60Hz. Primary Socket Types are North American Grounded or North American Non-Grounded - i.e. two parallel flat prongs with or without an earth connector. Participants are advised to bring their own electric adaptors which will be required.

ENTRY VISA REQUIREMENTS FOR THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Persons seeking entry into the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago must be in possession of a valid passport. Persons will be required to complete an Immigration (E/D) Card to enter the country. The E/D Card is provided by commercial airlines. For persons travelling on Official (Non-Commercial) aircraft the E/D Card will be provided on arrival.

Several countries within the Commonwealth require a visa for entry into the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago these include the following:

Australia	Nigeria
Cameroon	Papua New Guinea
Fiji Islands	Sri Lanka
India	Uganda
Mozambique	Tanzania
New Zealand	South Africa

However, during the period 31 October, 2009 to 01 December, 2009, visitors from those countries participating at CHOGM 2009 will be exempt from the regular visa requirement.

A *Visa Exemption Letter* will be provided and participants are advised to immediately contact Ms Angela Braithwaite or Ms Sharon Stephenson of the Commonwealth Business Council to request this document. Please be aware that some airlines may NOT allow passengers to board commercial aircraft without an appropriate entry visa or visa exemption document from the host country. The *Visa Exemption Letter* must also be presented to the relevant authorities upon arrival in Trinidad and Tobago.

An Information Desk will be set up at the airport to provide arriving passengers and organisations with advice and assistance as necessary.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago has a network of healthcare services for adults and children. Medical services are available on a 24-hour basis, at both public and private medical facilities. International medical insurance is recommended. Healthcare services, including medication, are provided free of charge at public health institutions. However, provision of healthcare services, as well as medication, at private institutions will incur a cost to participants.

There will be medical stations at the CBF 2009 venue and events, with ambulance services available for transport to an appropriate health facility, if required. Emergency services will be available at all times. An air ambulance emergency evacuation service will also be available.

Medical Clinics will be set up at the following locations:

- Hyatt Regency Trinidad
- Hilton Trinidad Hotel and Conference Centre
- Piarco International Airport
- Royal Caribbean Serenade of the Seas Cruise Ship

Medical treatment will conform to International Health Regulations (2005) in terms of confidentiality, dignity and human rights.

Information about any special health requirements you may have should be forwarded to the National Secretariat by **15 September 2009**, with a copy to the Conference & Events Manager, Commonwealth Business Council.

Participants are advised to travel with special medication or doctor's prescription. The National Secretariat for CBF 2009 should be informed if participants require special assistance or if medical supplies and equipment will be brought into the country.

Participants are advised to consult their personal physician or health clinic and obtain any necessary prophylactic drugs at least four weeks before travelling.

Participants will be responsible for their medical bills and prescriptions from private hospitals and are strongly advised to obtain medical or travel insurance before commencing their journey.

Attention is drawn to the WHO health advisory below:

Yellow Fever

A yellow fever vaccination certificate is required from travellers over one year of age coming from countries with risk of yellow fever transmission.

LOCAL TIME

The local time in Port of Spain is GMT minus 4 hours.

TRANSPORT

Piarco International Airport is 27 km (17 miles) from the centre of Port of Spain. The drive from the Airport to Port of Spain takes an average of 25-40 minutes. Taxis covering this route are available at a cost of US\$25 during daytime hours. Shuttles will be available from Monday 23 November to Tuesday 1 December 2009 to facilitate airport transfers between Piarco International Airport and official hotels, as well as the Serenade on the Seas cruise liner. Shuttles will operate on a continuous basis as may be required.