

PRESS RELEASE

**PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN BUSINESSES IN CARIBBEAN AND EU
TO BE BOLSTERED BY THIRD CARIFORUM-EU BUSINESS FORUM**

[St Michael, Barbados, March 9, 2015]

The Caribbean Export Development Agency will host its third CARIFORUM-EU Business Forum, scheduled to take place on April 15 – 16 in Montego Bay, Jamaica. The conference, which is organised in collaboration with the ACP Business Climate facility (BizClim), seeks to enhance partnerships between Caribbean businesses and those in Europe, enable public-private dialogue, and support the business climate reform agenda in the Caribbean. Focussing on three sectors: agro-processing (cocoa, herbs & spices), music and higher education the forum will bring together some 150 key stakeholders from the Caribbean, Europe, Africa and Pacific to not only engage in dialogue but to also explore business and trade opportunities during business to business meetings.

“Providing a platform for private sector firms in the region to explore business opportunities with overseas firms and hopefully increase business and penetrate new markets is a fundamental aspect of the Agency’s mandate” stated Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Executive Director of Caribbean Export.

Caribbean Export has previously hosted the CARIFORUM-EU Business Forum in 2008 in Barbados and 2012 in London, each time with the overall objective of supporting CARIFORUM businesses to utilise the benefits of the CARIFORUM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) that was signed in 2008 and providing a platform for private sector businesses to identify opportunities for trade, and by extension do business in Europe.

Participants at the Forum will include both Caribbean and European SME’s, government ministries, Business Support Organisations, Caribbean export board members and industry experts who will provide business clinics with participating firms to help build capacity required to develop greater market penetration.

Discussions at the Forum will cover an array of topics within the three sectors. For agro-processing, topics on the agenda include bean to bar manufacturing and branding for export markets. The music sector will delve into areas such as the development of a digital strategy for Caribbean musicians and breaking into the music festival market. As part of the higher education sector, topics on the agenda include branding for higher education institutions and specific requirements and expectations for recruitment.

Funded by the European Union as part of the 10th EDF Regional Private Sector Development Programme, firms are encouraged to attend this highly anticipated event and exploit the opportunity to meet with potential trading partners.

Sponsorship to attend is available and firms should visit the Agency's [website](#) for more information on how to participate.

Notes for Editors:

CARIFORUM-EU Business Forum
April 15-16, 2015
Montego Bay, Jamaica

Caribbean Export is a regional export development and trade and investment promotion organisation of the Forum of Caribbean States (CARIFORUM) currently executing the Regional Private Sector Programme (RPSDP) funded by the European Union under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF). Caribbean Export's mission is to increase the competitiveness of Caribbean countries by providing quality export development and trade and investment promotion services through effective programme execution and strategic alliances.

BizClim: The ACP Business Climate Facility (BizClim) is a program of the ACP Secretariat financed by the European Union under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF). It aims at fostering a business enabling environment in ACP countries and regions by improving legislation, institutional frame works and financial measures relating to the enabling environment of the private sector.

Links:

Forum website: www.cariforum.eu
Caribbean Export Development Agency: www.carib-export.com
BizClim: www.bizclim.org

For press inquiries and accreditation for the conference please contact:

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