

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade & International Business
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Secretary of State calls on Minister of Foreign Affairs Sinckler

Newly appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade & International Business, the Hon. Christopher Sinckler received his first official visit as Minister when Canada's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs & International Trade (Sport) Helena Guergis called on him at the Ministry's Culloden Road offices. Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade & International Business, the Hon. Donville Inniss, and the Canadian High Commissioner to Barbados, H.E. I. David Marshall were also present.

During the meeting the Ministers discussed a number of bilateral issues of mutual importance including the proposed CARICOM/Canada Free Trade Agreement, the Barbados/Canada Double Taxation Agreement and the draft Air Services Agreement, which was initialled in December 2007 and is currently awaiting final approval by both sides. Once approved, this Agreement will replace the 1985 Air Services Agreement between the two countries and is expected to play an important role in strengthening air links and tourism.

Minister Sinckler expressed pleasure at the level of support that Barbados has received from Canada over the years and said that he welcomed continued cooperation between the two countries especially in the area of financial services.

Minister Sinckler told the envoy that "Barbados is a small country with limited natural resources" and that trade is an important means of achieving our development goals.

Secretary of State Guergis is leading a Canadian trade mission of businesswomen to Barbados from 23-25 January 2008 as part of celebrations to commemorate the centenary of the establishment of the Canadian commercial trade office in Barbados.

Canada was one of the first countries with which Barbados established formal diplomatic relations when it became independent on 1966 (END).