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**PRESS RELEASE**

**LAUNCH OF CARIBBEAN TRADE AND PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (CTPSDP) – 2<sup>ND</sup> PHASE, AND 15<sup>TH</sup> CARIBBEAN GIFT AND CRAFT SHOW**

**Castries, Saint Lucia June 5, 2008.** The Honourable Rufus G. Bousquet, Minister of Trade, Industry, Commerce, Consumer Affairs and Investment and the Executive Director of Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export, Mr. Philip Williams will be the featured speakers at the official launch of the Caribbean Trade and Private Sector Development Programme (CTPSDP) – 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase, and the 15<sup>th</sup> Caribbean Gift and Craft Show (CGCS) on Thursday June 12, at 6.00 pm at the Auberge Seraphine in Castries. Both projects are being implemented by the Barbados based Caribbean Export

The agreement bringing into effect Phase Two of the CTPSDP was recently signed by the European Union (EU) and Caribbean Export. The main objective of this programme is to contribute to the gradual integration of CARIFORUM countries into the world economy and by so doing enhance regional economic growth and thus help to alleviate poverty.

According to Mr. Williams “the programme aims to increase the international competitiveness of the private sector in CARIFORUM Member states and to help the potentially more competitive sectors.” He noted it will support improvement of the trade environment as well as the institutional strengthening of business support organisations (BSOs) to enhance the range and quality of services delivered to their members and clients.

**‘Celebrating Handmade Designs and Caribbean Traditions’** is the theme for this 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary show which takes place from October 2-5, at the Sherbourne Conference Centre in Barbados and a large delegation of exhibitors and trade buyers from Saint Lucia is expected to participate. According to Veona Maloney, Caribbean Export’s Manager, Core Services, the theme highlights the pivotal role of design since it is recognised “that a handcrafted product often has a story, inspiring origin, or close connection to the designer, and respect for and dedication to quality, design and creativity, sets handcrafted items apart from mass-produced merchandise.”

She added 'Onsite Caribbean' a new and exciting collection of home accessories developed by eight (8) regional companies will also have its regional launch at the show and this should appeal to the regional and international buyers and members of the public attending the show.

FirstCaribbean International Bank is the main corporate sponsor of the CGCS and will be participating in official launch in Saint Lucia.

### **About Caribbean Export**

Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export) is a regional trade and investment organisation of the Forum of Caribbean States (CARIFORUM). Caribbean Export's mission is to increase the competitiveness of Caribbean countries by providing quality trade and investment development and promotion services through effective programme execution and strategic partnerships.

More information about Caribbean Export can be found at [www.carib-export.com](http://www.carib-export.com).  
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