



## **CARIBBEAN HOTEL ASSOCIATION APPLAUDS ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH EUROPE**

PARADISE ISLAND, Bahamas (Jan. 14, 2008) – The Board of Directors of the Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA), at their meeting during Marketplace 2008 here, has praised the recently concluded Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union, a first-ever, alliance that will ensure continued support of tourism interests in the Caribbean.

This is the first-ever international treaty to include language on Caribbean tourism and thus gives recognition to the importance of the development of the tourism industry that has become central to the future success of the regional economy.

As a result of this just concluded agreement, CHA looks forward to the establishment of an appropriate Cariforum mechanism that will lead to the rapid implementation of what has been agreed in order that the industry may improve its competitiveness in preparation for the agreed upon level of services liberalization.

“The Caribbean Hotel Association wishes to commend Ambassador Richard Bernal, the Director General of the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM) and his team of negotiators for successfully concluding this Economic Partnership Agreement,” said Peter Odle, President of CHA.

“CHA further commends the manner in which negotiating ministers, ambassadors and the CRNM fought for a text that reflected the aspirations of the tourism and hotel industry and our needs,” Odle added.

The CHA Board of Directors passed a resolution commending the CRNM for its tireless work and success in negotiating this EPA.

In passing the resolution, CHA specifically recognized the contribution made to achieving a satisfactory text on tourism by the Hon. Dame Billie Miller, Senior Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade for Barbados; His Excellency Mr. Federico Cuello, the Ambassador for the Dominican Republic in Brussels, His Excellency Mr. Errol Humphrey, the Ambassador for Barbados in Brussels, Mr. Henry Gill, the Senior Director, Technical of the CRNM, and Mr. Ramesch Chaitoo, the Head of Services Trade Union of the CRNM.

**###**