

## EPA to be Signed in July

(CARICOM Secretariat, Turkeyen, Greater Georgetown, Guyana)

Monday, May 12, 2008

The Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the European Commission (EC) and the Caribbean Forum of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (CARIFORUM) is to be signed in July 2008.

At the Twenty-Sixth Special Meeting of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) which wrapped up in Antigua and Barbuda on Saturday 10 May 2008, Ministers considered possible dates for signing and the provisional application of the Agreement and reported they were in consultations with the EC on the subject.

The EPA negotiation was concluded last December and Member States of CARIFORUM are in the process of reviewing the text prior to signature.

The COTED held discussions on what needed to be in place for implementation of the EPA. The CARICOM Secretariat has prepared a road map outlining in broad terms what needed to be done, and the focus is now placed on the commitments at the level of Member States. The Ministers agreed on the need to identify national coordinators to move the process forward.