

Business Roundtable in the Dominican Republic***Responding to the global economic crisis***

March 18th 2009 – Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

As of January 28th 2009

Debate, network and interact: Enhance your business in the Dominican Republic

This high-level business forum is targeted to senior executives genuinely interested in influencing the Dominican Republic's economic and business development. Top government leaders, regional executives, investors, policy-makers and commentators join in a discussion-driven setting to exchange views on future trends, growth strategies, best practices and public policies affecting the country's business prospects in a difficult economic climate. Is government doing enough to support businesses through these turbulent times? How are businesses coping? What sectors offer the most opportunity for growth in the medium- and long term?

Conference chair

Anna Szterenfeld, Latin America Editor, Economist Intelligence Unit

Provisional programme

9.30 am **Registration and continental breakfast**

10.00 am Opening session

Economist Intelligence Unit briefing:**How will the Dominican Republic fare in the global economic downturn?**

- Global economic outlook: How long and deep will the crisis be?
- How severe will the impact be on the Dominican Republic?
- Implications for business and future investment
- US-Latin America agenda under a new US administration

Anna Szterenfeld, Latin America Editor, Economist Intelligence Unit

10.30 am Featured session

How is government responding to the global crisis?**A conversation with H.E. Temístocles Montás, Minister of Economy, Planning and Development**

- How is government helping small and large businesses reduce the effects of the crisis?
- What can government do to maintain investment inflows?
- What policies are needed to promote exports?
- Is government doing enough to facilitate access to finance?
- How can the Dominican Republic maximise the benefits and reduce the costs of the DR-CAFTA and EPA trade agreements?

11.00am **Break**

11.30 am Panel discussion

The business response: Surviving and thriving in turbulent economic times

- What are companies doing to cope in the current economic climate?
- What adjustments should they be making to their sales, marketing and operations strategies?
- Is government doing enough to help businesses navigate through uncertain times?
- What opportunities do businesses see coming out of the crisis?
- How can businesses take better advantage of existing trade agreements?
- What financing options are there available?

Marco Cruz, Managing Director, Central America and the Caribbean, Odebrecht

Jose Luis Corripio Estrada, President, Grupo Corripio

David Lewis, Vice-president, Manchester Trade

Jerry Haar, Associate Dean, Florida International University

- 1.00 pm **Lunch**
- 2.30 pm Panel discussion
Dominican voices: Perspectives from a new generation
 - Developing new leaders in the public and private sectors
 - How will the Dominican Republic arrive to the next stage of development?
 - Promoting an innovation culture
 - Building awareness abroad of opportunities offered by the Dominican Republic*Darys Estrella, General Director, **Stock Exchange of the Dominican Republic***
*Jake Kheel, Environmental Director, **Grupo PuntaCana***
- 3.30pm Afternoon workshops
Smaller roundtable discussions focusing on strategic sectors and key areas of development
- 3.30-4.45 pm
Discussion 1: Infrastructure development and tourism
 - How have infrastructures priorities such as ports, roads, and airports are shifted as a result of the crisis?
 - Is the current infrastructure sufficient to compete internationally?
 - Will existing tourism projects survive the crisis?
 - What is the tourism industry doing to cope with less demand?
 - What policies could government implement to help these sectors advance?*Víctor Díaz Rúa, **Minister of Public Works and Communications****
*Francisco Javier García, **Minister of Tourism****
- 3.30-4.45 pm
Discussion 2: The energy sector
 - Will the crisis push reform forward?
 - What investment opportunities would reform bring?
 - How should alternative energy fit into a larger energy strategy?*Arístides Fernández Zucco, President, **National Energy Commission****
- 4.45 pm **Break**
- 5.15pm Featured presentation
Latin America in a new global reality
*Jorge Castañeda, Global Distinguished Professor of Politics and Latin American Studies, **New York University***
- 6.00pm Keynote discussion
Building the Dominican Republic of tomorrow: Vision and priorities for the next five years
H.E. Leonel Fernández Reyna, President of the Dominican Republic
 - The Dominican Republic in a new global economic paradigm: How have priorities shifted?
 - Objectives for the social agenda and long-term development strategy
 - Human capital and competitiveness: What is government doing to invest in tomorrow's workforce?
- 7.00pm **Conclusions and closing remarks**
**invited*