
Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting

Trinidad & Tobago, 27-29 November 2009



**PARTNERING FOR A MORE EQUITABLE AND
SUSTAINABLE FUTURE**

NOTE ON MEDIA ARRANGEMENTS

Commonwealth Secretariat
Marlborough House
London
SW1Y 5HX
UK

October 6, 2009

CONTENTS

	Page
1 Dates of Meetings	3
2 Theme	3
3 Venue	3
4 CHOGM Associated Events	3
a The Commonwealth Youth Forum (CYF)	4
b The Commonwealth Business Forum (CBF)	4
c The Commonwealth People's Forum (CPF)	4
5 The Pre-CHOGM meeting of foreign ministers	4
6 Accreditation	4
7 Collection of CHOGM Accreditation passes	6
8 CHOGM 2009 Communications Team	6
9 Media Centre	7
10 News Agencies and Special Media Delegations	10
11 Accommodation	11
12 Hotel Rates	12
13 Arrival	13
14 Transport	13
15 Entry visa requirements for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago	13
16 Customs Clearance	14
17 Banking & Currency	15
18 Local Time	15
19 Health Requirements	15
20 Electricity Supply	16
21 Drivers' Permits	17
22 Business and Shopping	17

**Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM)
Port of Spain, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, 27-29 November 2009
Operational Notes & Media Arrangements**

1 DATES OF MEETINGS

The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) will be held in Port of Spain, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, from **Friday 27 to Sunday 29 November 2009**.

A CHOGM Media Liaison Committee Meeting was held at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London on Tuesday 23 June 2009 to discuss media arrangements.

2 THEME

The theme of CHOGM 2009 is *Partnering for a more Equitable and Sustainable Future*.

3 VENUE

The CHOGM Opening Ceremony will be held at the National Academy for the Performing Arts, Port of Spain, on **Friday 27 November 2009**.

Heads of Government will have their Retreat at the Hyatt Regency Trinidad from **Friday 27 to Sunday 29 November 2009**.

The Media Centre, with facilities for broadcast, print and electronic media, will be set up at the International Finance Centre (IFC), across from the centrally located Hyatt Regency Trinidad.

Media pools will be assigned to cover the Retreat on a limited basis. Pool schedules will be issued during the CHOGM and will be jointly managed by the Commonwealth Secretariat Communications Team and the Communications Team of the Trinidad and Tobago National Secretariat for CHOGM 2009.

The Commonwealth Secretariat Conference Spokesperson and the National Secretariat for CHOGM 2009 will hold a media logistics briefing on **Tuesday 24 November 2009**.

The Commonwealth Secretary-General, H.E. Kamalesh Sharma, will hold a pre-CHOGM media briefing on **Wednesday 25 November 2009** in the Media Briefing Room, Media Centre.

4 CHOGM ASSOCIATED EVENTS

As is customary, three CHOGM associated events will be held immediately prior to the CHOGM 2009 in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. These are:

a. The Commonwealth Youth Forum (CYF)

Participation in the CYF is open to youth between the ages of 15 and 25 years. It will be held from 21 to 27 November 2009. The Forum programme will begin on the island of Tobago and will conclude in Trinidad.

b. The Commonwealth Business Forum (CBF)

The CBF, a major international business event which brings together some 1,000 business and government leaders from across the Commonwealth, will be held from 23 to 26 November 2009 on the cruise liner *Serenade of the Seas*, which will be docked in the Port of Spain Harbour.

c. The Commonwealth People's Forum (CPF)

The CPF, the largest civil society event in the Commonwealth, will be held from 22 to 26 November 2009. The Opening Ceremony of the CPF will be held at Queen's Hall, while The Cascadia Hotel & Conference Centre in Port of Spain will be the venue for the Forum itself.

5 THE PRE-CHOGM MEETING OF COMMONWEALTH FOREIGN MINISTERS

The Pre-CHOGM Meeting of Commonwealth Foreign Ministers will be held at the **Trinidad Hilton and Conference Centre** in Port of Spain, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on **Wednesday 25 and Thursday 26 November 2009**.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, accompanied by the Commonwealth Secretary General, will address a news conference on **Thursday 26 November 2009** on the deliberations of Foreign Ministers.

6 ACCREDITATION

All media participating in CHOGM must be accredited since access to media facilities will be available only to accredited media representatives. Accreditation is open to journalists, broadcasters, photographers, film and television camera crews and technicians.

The Commonwealth Secretariat shall be the main point of reference on matters concerning media accreditation, with the exception of security concerns. The Commonwealth Secretariat Communications and Public Affairs Division and the Communications Team of the National Secretariat for CHOGM 2009 will jointly manage media accreditation.

Media representatives may submit accreditation requests electronically. A media accreditation form can be accessed through the CHOGM 2009 website and printed from your Web browser or downloaded as a Microsoft Word document. An original form can also be posted upon request. Please send an email to chogm@commonwealth.int or chogm2009@opm.gov.tt indicating your interest in receiving an original form by post. Requests can also be made by facsimile at the following number +44(0) 20 7839 9081.

Completed and signed forms can be scanned and e-mailed to chogm@commonwealth.int with a copy to chogm2009@opm.gov.tt. Applications submitted by post to the address listed below will also be accepted. Please note that forms submitted without a signature will be considered incomplete and will not be processed.

In order to establish bona fides, each application submitted by a representative of the media must be accompanied by an official letter from a media organisation on an original company letterhead, confirming that the applicant has been assigned to cover CHOGM 2009. The letter must indicate the applicant's position and role and must be signed by a Senior Editor.

This must be accompanied by a copy of a National Press Card or equivalent identification. All applications must also include two (2) passport-sized photographs. Digital images are preferred and can be sent by e-mail to chogm@commonwealth.int or chogm2009@opm.gov.tt.

Photograph submissions must comply with the specifications listed below:

- JPEG format, no larger than 50KB
- Full colour and passport sized (50 mm x 70 mm)
- Taken in the past six months
- File name for digital images must be identified as follows: surname, given name and date of birth (Year/Month/Day)
- Any printed photographs must be identified on the reverse with the surname, given name and date of birth (Year/Month/Day)

Applications by fax will not be accepted as an official application for accreditation, but can be held until receipt of the original documents. In this case, the application for accreditation will only be officially accepted upon receipt of the original or scanned signed application form, the official authorisation letter on original company letterhead and the photographs.

Please note that all applications for accreditation must be submitted no later than **15 October 2009**. **Applications submitted after this date will not be processed.**

Media accreditations enquiries should be directed to:

CHOGM 2009 Media Accreditation
Communications and Public Affairs Division
Commonwealth Secretariat
Marlborough House, Pall Mall
London SW1Y 5HX
United Kingdom
Telephone enquiries: +44 (0)20 7747 6385
Fax: +44 (0)20 7839 9081
E-mail: chogm@commonwealth.int

Accreditation enquiries from media organisations based in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean region should be directed to:

Media Accreditation
National Secretariat for CHOGM 2009
Office of the Prime Minister
Level 14 Tower C, International Finance Centre
No. 1A Wrightson Road
Port of Spain
Trinidad and Tobago
chogm2009@opm.gov.tt

Please note that all international media will be accredited by the Commonwealth Secretariat and will receive their accreditation passes upon arrival in Trinidad and Tobago at the location designated by the National Secretariat for CHOGM 2009. Local media will be accredited by the National Secretariat. No media personnel will be accredited as delegates.

Official photographers who accompany their Heads of Delegation and land at the Southern Terminal in a private aircraft will be allowed to disembark first to photograph their Head of Delegation. A maximum of three (3) official photographers who DO NOT arrive with their Head of Delegation may be allowed access to photograph or videotape the arrival of their Head of Delegation, subject to the approval of the Airports Authority of Trinidad and Tobago.

Official photographers and media will be allowed pool access to the Island Site after going through metal detectors. They will be escorted by Security and Communications personnel from the International Media Centre for two minute sprays per pool of 30 persons each. They will then be escorted back to the Media Centre.

In order to access the Island Site to attend and photograph or video record bilateral meetings, official photographers must use the Island Site passes allocated to their delegation, which can be obtained from their Delegation Secretary. For both pool and bilateral meetings coverage in the Island Site, official photographers will be required to wear arm bands issued by the Media Centre. If an official photographer is listed as a member of the Official Country Delegation, he/she will not be allowed to access to the Island Site with cameras or equipment except as members of pools or to cover bilateral meetings as stipulated above.

7 COLLECTION OF CHOGM ACCREDITATION PASSES

A Media Accreditation Help Desk will be located at the Jean Pierre Complex Accreditation Centre, Port of Spain. Media personnel are to collect their accreditation passes upon presentation of a valid ID or passport. To facilitate collection, please present the reference number quoted on the confirmation e-mail you receive following the online accreditation procedure.

8 CHOGM 2009 COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Enquiries on CHOGM 2009 may be directed to the following officers:

Commonwealth Secretariat in London

Mr. Eduardo del Buey
Conference Spokesperson
Email: e.delbuey@commonwealth.int
Cell +44-7740 450 901
Office: +44 20 7747 6380

Mr. Manoah Esipisu
Deputy Conference Spokesperson
Email: m.esipisu@commonwealth.int
Cell +44 7894 462 021
Office +44 20 7747 6379

Ms. Geraldine Goh
CHOGM Communications Officer
Email: g.goh@commonwealth.int
Cell: + 44 789 459 3518
Office: +44 207 747 6535

Ms. Yvonne Chin
CHOGM Communications Officer
Email: y.chin@commonwealth.int
Cell: + 44 785 321 4748
Office: +44 207 747 6514

National Secretariat for CHOGM 2009 in Port of Spain

Ms. Reah Rooplal
Communications Coordinator
National Secretariat for CHOGM 2009
Email: chogm2009@opm.gov.tt
Cell: +1868 488 6204
Office: +1 868 625 7937

Ms. Adelle Roopchand
Media Centre Facilitator
National Secretariat for CHOGM 2009
Email: chogm2009@opm.gov.tt
Cell: +1 868 483 2626
Office: +1 868 625 7937

Ms. Cheryl Moses
Communications Officer
National Secretariat for CHOGM 2009
Email: chogm2009@opm.gov.tt

Cell: +1 868 483 2780
Office: +1 868 625 7937

9 MEDIA CENTRE

The International Media Centre is located on Levels 2 to 6 of the International Financial Centre, Tower C, Wrightson Road, Port of Spain. The complex is adjacent to the Hyatt Regency Trinidad and within walking distance to the Port of Spain Harbour, where the Caribbean Princess will be docked.

The Media Centre is equipped with live broadcasting facilities, working and briefing rooms, wireless internet, PABX, telephones, facsimile services, a server equipped to share pool photographs, photocopiers and laptop/desktop work stations.

A fully-equipped video editing suite equipped for various professional tape formats is available and is wired for input/output to Master Control. It can be booked by broadcasters on a user-pay basis. The National Secretariat for CHOGM 2009 recommends that media representatives utilize the transmission services provided by the Host Broadcaster.

a. Work Areas

General work areas will be provided in the Media Centre for journalists and photographers. The work area will be equipped with up to 200 work stations, which will each have standard Trinidad and Tobago power outlets (see Section 20: ELECTRICITY SUPPLY, for details),. Desktop PCs with Microsoft Office/Windows packages and printers will also be available in equipped workstations.

Working rooms will consist of cubicle style workstations. Each cubicle is 6' x 8' and has a wrap around style table top. Two dual power sockets and a duplex data/voice socket are located at the bottom of the cubicle wall panel.

b. Information and Communication Technology

Computers will provide free Internet access and will share printers. Internet, telephone, facsimile and postal services will be available at the Business Centre in Media Centre at the International Financial Centre.

GSM mobile telephone services are currently operated by Bmobile TSTT (Telecommunications Services of Trinidad and Tobago) and Digicel. Internet services with GPRS are available. Land line telephones provided in the general work area will have Trinidad and Tobago standard modem points and will be available for rental from TSTT.

A charge card/PIN system for the payment of all telephone, modem and fax calls will be available and there will be a limited number of payphones.

Television monitors will be placed throughout the Media Centre to relay messages, general information and transmit the Host Broadcaster Pool Channels.

A central storage system will be in place for photojournalists to share photographs. This can be accessed from any computer terminal on the 2nd and 3rd floor of the Media Centre.

An IP phone is provided in each cubicle. This phone will work on a Pre-Paid credit basis. Media are required to buy credit from the TSTT facility, and use the pin on the call credit card to make a call.

One black and white printer will be shared by a group of 10-15 workstations. This printer will be located on the end of every second row of cubicles.

32" Television sets will be located on stands at the end of each row of cubicles toward the centre of the building. Live and pre-recorded video feeds of conference events such as airport arrivals and the opening ceremony can be viewed on these sets.

c. Business Centre

The business centre will have a reception counter and provide the following services:

- Copying
- Facsimile
- Scanning
- Press release reproduction

Facilities will be available for special printing jobs that cannot be done from the workstation cubicles.

d. Technical Support

Technical support will be available at the Media Centre to provide assistance with regard to computers, telephone and video uplink services.

e. Reception Area

Staff at the reception desk will be able to guide media to any facility within the Media Centre. Information on CHOGM activities and general information on the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago will also be available.

Media press releases will be available on display shelves opposite the reception desk.

f. Web Centre

The web centre will be the central command for all official information. This hub of activity will provide the following facilities:

- Live streaming video
- Image Gallery with official photography

- Up to date, complete information coming from the National Secretariat for CHOGM 2009 about the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting and its associated events
- Official documents, speeches and press releases
- Video Clips

g. Media Centre Opening Hours

From 24 to 25 November 2009, the Media Centre will open between 8.00 a.m. and 8.00 p.m. local time.

From 26 November 2009 until midnight on 29 November 2009, the Media Centre will be opened on a 24-hour basis.

h. Media Conferences

Scheduled daily briefings by the Commonwealth Secretariat Conference Spokesperson and other news conferences will take place in the Media Centre.

i. Other Media Centre Facilities

An Information Desk, a main briefing room and supplementary briefing rooms will operate throughout the Meeting period.

A cafeteria will also be in operation in close proximity to the Media Centre.

For further information on the Media Centre, please contact:

Ms. Adelle Roopchand
Media Centre Facilitator
National Secretariat for CHOGM 2009
Office of the Prime Minister
Level 14 Tower C, International Finance Centre
No. 1A Wrightson Road
Port of Spain
Trinidad and Tobago
Email: chogm2009@opm.gov.tt

Or

Mr. Stefan Wiederkehr
GlobeCast Coordinator
swiederkehr@globecastafrica.com

j. Press Coverage & Photo Pools

Executive Sessions at CHOGM are closed to the media. However, limited media pools will be permitted to enter the conference room for a few minutes prior to the commencement of the First Executive Session in order to take still photographs and video footage (without audio). Photo pools will also be established for other events, including the Retreat.

The Host Broadcaster and official photographer will be in every pool. Their footage, sound and photographs will be made available to all accredited media via the Media Centre server. Further details will be available at the start of the CHOGM.

k. Television & Radio

The host broadcaster will provide television coverage and photo opportunities during CHOGM. Recordings will be fed on the Pool Channel and will be available for recording and editing by broadcasters at the Media Centre. Radio facilities will also be established and radio suites available. Facilities will be available on a booking basis.

A standard range of library file and pool material will be available on a complimentary basis. Additional services to be provided at commercial rates include:

- Tape dubbing
- Hire of ENG crews
- Satellite link-ups and transmission

A Media Services Rate Card will be available via the CHOGM 2009 website by 11 September 2009.

10 NEWS AGENCIES AND SPECIAL MEDIA DELEGATIONS

A limited number of offices for news agencies, other news organisations and special media delegations accompanying heads or other dignitaries to CHOGM will be available at a cost.

These will be supplied with basic furniture, including up to four chairs and two desks, general lighting, power, carpet and an office nameplate. Telephone lines can be requested and other equipment can be provided, but will require payment by the user. Media organisations who want to book private office space or requiring additional information on agency facilities should visit the CHOGM 2009 website at www.chogm2009.org or email chogm2009@opm.gov.tt from **11 September 2009**.

11 ACCOMMODATION

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago has leased two cruise ships to be berthed at the Port of Spain Harbour (adjacent to the Hyatt Regency Trinidad and the International Financial Centre) during CHOGM 2009 to serve as floating hotels to accommodate delegates and members of the Media. Accommodation for media will be primarily available on the cruise liner **Caribbean Princess from 24 November 2009 from 7.00 AM**. The Caribbean Princess cruise liner will be berthed within walking distance from the International Media Centre.

A range of hotel rooms in Port of Spain will also be available for the period preceding the docking of the cruise liner in Port of Spain on **23 November 2009**. A transport shuttle service will operate between official hotels and the International Media Centre from **23 November to until Sunday 29 November**, 2009. The shuttle will operate between the hours of 7.00 a.m. – 11.00 p.m.

Options for accommodation prior to 23 November 2009 will be posted on the official CHOGM website at www.chogm2009.org by **1 July 2009**.

A central online reservation system is being set up by the host Government for **cruise ship reservations**. Booking details will be available on the CHOGM 2009 website: <http://www.chogm2009.org> from **1 July 2009**. The online reservation system will be available from **31 July 2009**.

Please note that persons requiring accommodation on the Caribbean Princess Cruise Ship must be registered and accredited with the Commonwealth Secretariat before making reservation.

Initial room reservations must be made on-line between July 31 and September 30, 2009. A 20% deposit will be required at the time of reservation.

Room cancellations after September 15 will forfeit the 20% deposit.

All changes and names must be input by October 25, 2009. FULL payment for all rooms are due at this time as well.

Alternatively, information on approved land-based hotels will be also available online at the CHOGM website (<http://www.chogm2009.org>) from **1 July 2009**. **Media representatives who choose land based hotels will be responsible for making their reservations directly with the relevant hotels.** Further information on land-based hotels available at www.gotrinidadandtobago.com

Hotels may require cash deposits if payment by credit card is not possible. Hotel check-in times vary. Persons requiring accommodation before the normal check-in time should reserve accommodation from the day before arrival if they need immediate access to their rooms. It should also be noted that if a late check-out is required on the day of departure, late checkout charges may apply. Accommodation expenses are the responsibility of the individual and/or the accredited media organisation. The National Secretariat for CHOGM 2009 and the Commonwealth Secretariat bear no responsibility for any expenses incurred.

12 HOTEL RATES

Rates on the Caribbean Princess are full board, and include meals. Low-priced rooms are limited and will be sold on a first-come first-served basis. Please visit www.princess.com to view room options.

The rates for accommodation on the ship are indicated in the table below. Single (S) and Double (D) occupancy rates are specified. ***These rates are inclusive of all meals, taxes and gratuities. Residents of the ships will, however, be responsible for all alcoholic beverages consumed at any time and all non-alcoholic beverages consumed outside of meal services.***

Cruise Ship Room Category	US\$ Per room per night
Royal Suite/Grand Suite	1200 S/D
Category A - Suite w/balcony	900 S 950 D
Category B - Suite w/balcony	700 S 750 D
Category C - Suite w/balcony	600 S 650 D
Category D - Superior Stateroom w/balcony	400 S 450 D
Category F - Outer stateroom with window	275 S 350 D
Category G - Interior stateroom (no window)	225 S 300 D

Booking details will be available on the CHOGM 2009 website: <http://www.chogm2009.org>, from **1 July 2009**. The online reservation system will be available from **31 July 2009**.

For further accommodation enquiries, please email chogm2009@opm.gov.tt

13 ARRIVAL

Piarco International Airport, Port of Spain, will receive most international flights for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

14 TRANSPORT

Piarco International Airport is 27 km (17 miles) from the centre of Port of Spain. The drive from the Airport to Port of Spain takes an average of 25-40 minutes. Taxis covering this route are available between US\$25 to US\$40 during daytime hours. Shuttles will be available from Monday 23 November to Tuesday 1 December 2009 to facilitate airport transfers between Piarco International Airport and official hotels, as well as the Caribbean Princess cruise liner. Shuttles will operate on a continuous basis as may be required.

Help Desks at Piarco International Airport will assist media with transport, directions to media hotels, the Caribbean Princess and the Media Centre.

15 ENTRY VISA REQUIREMENTS FOR THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Persons seeking entry into the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago must be in possession of a valid passport. Persons will be required to complete an Immigration (E/D) Card to enter the country. The E/D Card is provided by commercial airlines. For persons travelling on Official (Non-Commercial) aircraft the E/D Card will be provided on arrival.

Nationals of the following countries require visas for entry into the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago:

- Australia
- Cameroon
- Fiji Islands
- India
- Mozambique
- New Zealand
- Nigeria
- Papua New Guinea
- Sri Lanka
- Uganda
- Tanzania
- South Africa

However, for the period **31 October to 1 December 2009**, visitors from **these countries travelling to Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to participate at the CHOGM will be exempted from the usual visa requirements**. In order to benefit from this arrangement, a visa exemption request should be sent by letter to the National Secretariat for CHOGM 2009 at chogm2009@opm.gov.tt. The National Secretariat will require names, passport numbers and travel details in order to process such requests.

A visa exemption letter will be sent to media representatives once the request is processed. Kindly note that airlines may not allow passengers to board commercial aircraft without an appropriate entry visa or visa exemption letter from the host country. Visa exemption letters must also be presented upon arrival to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Media representatives from non-Commonwealth countries must obtain visas through the usual channels. For more information on the appropriate visa for your trip, contact the nearest consulate for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago or your travel agent, or see the Division of Immigration website at www.immigration.gov.tt . A full list of visa offices and their contact details are available on this site.

For a list of High Commissions, Embassies and Consulates of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago see:

<http://trinidad-guide.info/travel.basics/embassies.and.consulates>

Applications for visa exemptions or visas should be made at least one month before your date of travel.

16 CUSTOMS CLEARANCE

Customs formalities in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago require media representatives to undergo simple customs clearance procedures on arrival. Personal effects are exempt from duty and taxes if they are declared on arrival and exported on departure. Such personal articles include clothing, personal computers and cameras. A limited quantity of alcoholic beverages and tobacco products for personal use are also allowed duty and tax free entry. These products are limited to alcoholic beverages (wine or spirits not exceeding 1.5 litres) and tobacco products (200 cigarettes or 50 cigars or 250g of tobacco). Persons wishing to enter the country with items in excess of these allowances should be prepared to pay the pertinent charges.

A list of equipment being imported into the country for purposes of CHOGM 2009 should be sent to the Media Centre Facilitator of the National Secretariat for CHOGM 2009 at least eight weeks in advance of the expected arrival date for speedy clearance:

Ms. Adelle Roopchand
Media Centre Facilitator
National Secretariat for CHOGM 2009
Office of the Prime Minister
Level 14 Tower C, International Finance Centre
No. 1A Wrightson Road
Port of Spain
Trinidad and Tobago
Email: chogm2009@opm.gov.tt

Relevant regulations are available at <http://www.ird.gov.tt> and <http://www.customs.gov.tt>

17 BANKING & CURRENCY

Banks are open from 8.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. on Monday to Thursday and from 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and 3.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. on Friday. The main

banks are Republic Bank, RBTT Bank Ltd., Scotia Bank, First Citizens Bank, Citibank, Intercommercial Bank and Bank of Baroda.

Cash dispensing machines are widely available. Banking services will be available to the media in the International Financial Centre, which will house the Media Centre and is adjacent to the Hyatt Regency Trinidad. Major credit or debit cards are widely accepted (with the exception of American Express). Most hotels and the Caribbean Princess accept major credit and debit cards. If you do not own one of these, please carry cash.

Most internationally recognised currencies and travellers cheques can be exchanged at commercial banks, hotels' Forex Bureaux (bureaux de change) and at the Piarco International Airport.

The national currency of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is the Trinidad and Tobago Dollar. The approximate exchange rates in June 2009 are US\$1 = TT\$6.30; UK£1 = TT\$10.30; Euro 1 = TT\$8.83 and EC\$1 = TT\$2.34.

18 LOCAL TIME

The local time in Port of Spain is GMT minus 4 hours.

19 HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago has a network of healthcare services for adults and children. Medical services are available on a 24-hour basis, at both public and private medical facilities. International medical insurance is recommended. Healthcare services, including medication, are provided free of charge at public health institutions. However, provision of healthcare services, as well as medication, at private institutions will incur a cost to participants.

There will be medical stations at all CHOGM 2009 venues and events, with ambulance services available for transport to an appropriate health facility, if required. Emergency services will be available at all times. An air ambulance emergency evacuation service will also be available.

Medical Clinics will be set up at the following locations:

- Hyatt Regency Trinidad
- Hilton Trinidad Hotel and Conference Centre
- Piarco International Airport
- Caribbean Princess Cruise Ship
- Royal Caribbean Serenade of the Seas Cruise Ship

Medical treatment will conform to International Health Regulations (2005) in terms of confidentiality, dignity and human rights.

Information about any special health requirements you may have should be forwarded to the National Secretariat for CHOGM 2009 by **15 September 2009**, with a copy to the Conference Officer, Commonwealth Secretariat.

Media representatives are advised to travel with special medication or doctor's prescription. The National Secretariat for CHOGM 2009 should be informed if media representatives require special assistance or if medical supplies and equipment will be brought into the country.

Media representatives are advised to consult their personal physician or health clinic and obtain any necessary prophylactic drugs at least four weeks before travelling.

Media representatives will be responsible for their medical bills and prescriptions from private hospitals and are strongly advised to obtain medical or travel insurance before commencing their journey.

Attention is drawn to the WHO health advisory below:

Yellow Fever

A yellow fever vaccination certificate is required from travellers over one year of age coming from countries with risk of yellow fever transmission.

H1N1

The Influenza A H1N1 virus causes a respiratory illness similar to the seasonal flu. The virus is contagious; it can spread from person to person through droplets released when an ill person coughs or sneezes.

A person can become infected by inhaling droplets directly or by touching surfaces contaminated with flu virus and then touching their own mouth, eyes or nose (or someone else's mouth or nose) before washing their hands.

Persons with Influenza A H1N1 may be contagious – from one day before they develop symptoms and up to 7 days after they get sick.

Symptoms of Influenza A H1N1 include:

- Fever, along with
- cough
- runny nose
- sore throat
- body aches, headache
- fatigue
- Some people may develop diarrhoea and vomiting
- Severe illness can include pneumonia, respiratory failure

If you are a low risk patient: stay at home and avoid social interactions. If medication such as Panadol or Tylenol does not break your fever by Day 2 or 3, then seek medical assistance. If at any time you have shortness of breath / difficulty breathing or any other emergency warning sign, then you need to go to the hospital immediately.

If you are a high risk patient, please seek medical care. High risk categories include pregnant women, children under five years of age, persons with chronic medical conditions, including asthma and other lung conditions, sickle cell anemia, heart disease, diabetes, obesity, HIV/AIDS and any other condition affecting the immune system.

20 ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

The power supply is 110-120V, 60Hz. Primary Socket Types are North American Grounded or North American Non-Grounded – i.e. two parallel flat prongs with or without an earth connector. Media representatives are advised to bring their own electric adaptors if required.

21 DRIVERS' PERMITS

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago recognises valid driving permits of Commonwealth countries as well as International Driving Permits. They must be carried when operating a motor vehicle.

22 BUSINESS AND SHOPPING

Government offices are open from 8.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. Monday to Friday. Shops are open from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. Monday to Friday and 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. on Saturday. Shopping malls are open from 10.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. Monday to Saturday. Most businesses, including shopping malls and plazas, are closed on Sundays and public holidays. Supermarkets and some pharmacies are the exception.