



National Cultural Policy for Barbados 2010

MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURE



Group of Dancers performing at the NIFCA (National Independence Festival of the Creative Arts) – NCF

National Cultural Policy for Barbados

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Crop Over dancers at National Heroes Square, Bridgetown, 1975 – (unknown)

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. The Context for a National Cultural Policy
3. Definition of Barbadian Culture
4. The Methodology and Fashioning of a Barbadian Cultural Policy – the Consultative Process
5. Objectives of the National Cultural Policy
6. The Role of Government
7. The Framework
8. Barbados in the Global Arena
9. Culture and National Development
10. Promoting a Culture of Excellence
11. Promoting National Pride
12. Cultural Diversity
13. Cultural Heritage Preservation and Protection
14. Culture, Trade and the Cultural Industries
15. Culture and Education
16. Culture and Tourism
17. Culture and Sports
18. Culture and Agriculture
19. Culture and Health
20. Culture and Technology
21. Culture and the Mass Media
22. Implementation and Review





1. Introduction

- 1.1 In its 2008 Manifesto, the government defines culture as

“a way of life. . . . based on unique sustainable values and ways of behaving that are shared and transmitted from generation to generation to help people overcome the challenges of life”.

- 1.2 This definition is in keeping with what has become a universally accepted definition of culture, adopted at the World Conference on Culture MONDIACULT) in Mexico City in 1982. At this meeting, it was reaffirmed that

“. . . in its broadest sense, culture can now be regarded as “the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group. In addition to art and literature, it encompasses lifestyles, basic human rights, value systems traditions and beliefs”.

- 1.3 This cultural policy therefore seeks to create a framework for the continued positive development of Barbadian culture and ensure that Barbadians and their culture are central to overall national development.

2. The Context for a National Cultural Policy

- 2.1 Barbadians, like the rest of the people of the Caribbean, have, for the past five hundred years, struggled to liberate themselves from a legacy of slavery and colonialism, a legacy which sought aggressively to create among them a sense of powerlessness and a lack of confidence in who they were. Understandably, the pattern of development in the region assumed very eurocentric characteristics. The slaves, transported to the “New World”, found themselves in an environment in which all that had been

familiar was destroyed. Every indigenous system in the region, whether political, educational, economic, or religious, was declared primitive and barbaric and duly replaced by “superior” colonial systems. Most significantly of all, since educational and religious institutions were the most effective tools of colonial domination, the British system of education was enforced, English enforced as the language of communication, and the Anglican Church installed as the state religion. In essence, the entire value system of the enslaved people was declared unworthy of preservation and summarily discarded.

2.2 Even after five hundred years, this powerlessness can still be seen, for instance, in the all too frequent complaint

that we lack confidence in our own ability to be responsible for our own development, preferring instead to believe that successful development is far more likely to come from foreign expertise. Such a view is of course reinforced by the increasingly dominant influence of the mass media and the effects of globalization.

2.3 It is reassuring, however, that even after hundreds of years of enslavement, the colonial powers were unable to destroy totally the culture which was brought across the Middle Passage. Indeed, the resilience of the African people was demonstrated in the fact that they appropriated aspects of the European cultures to which they were exposed, and which in so many cases were



Young Barbadian drummers – NCF

thrust upon them, assimilating them into their own, and in the end, creating a culture which could be called truly Caribbean.

- 2.4 Culture is dynamic, and it will evolve and change as it comes into contact with other cultures. This policy therefore seeks to focus on Barbadian culture as the synthesis of experiences and practices which define us as a people, and on the various manifestations of those cultural experiences and practices which have shaped our unique national identity. It will seek to highlight the positive aspects of our culture, to inculcate those values and norms which can contribute to the strengthening of our communities, to the empowerment of our people and, to awakening and sustaining a sense of pride in our culture which is reflected in its acceptance and promotion at home and abroad.

“ . . . in its broadest sense, culture can now be regarded as “the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group. In addition to art and literature, it encompasses lifestyles, basic human rights, value systems traditions and beliefs”.

3. *Definition of Barbadian Culture*

- 3.1 It is perhaps axiomatic to say that Barbados has made significant strides in its cultural development over the last four decades since Independence. A Cultural Policy formulated at the beginning of the twenty-first century must therefore be codifying but visionary, celebratory of our heritage whilst at the same time making allowances for the cultural diversity and changing ethnicities of today's Barbados. Any policies articulated within this document must not only be driven by current demands, but should also be viewed and accepted within the context of Barbados' national strategic goals. The policy document must address the immediacy of our circumstances as well as provide both short and long term objectives and action if it is to be applicable to a Barbados in the process of development.

- 3.2 Raymond Williams, eminent British writer on cultural matters, concluded that culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language. Given the complexity of the word, any definition of Barbadian culture must take into account this country's post independence nation-building efforts, its socio-economic structural and infrastructural development, and ultimately, its concept of self-determination. In 1979, Government commissioned a comprehensive report and plan for Barbadian culture. This task was assigned to one of our preeminent sons of the soil, Kamau Brathwaite, who defined Barbadian culture broadly as being an

“historically influenced life-style and expression, taking into special account the ancestral forces that have contributed to this life-style and expression . . . so

that Amerindian, European and African orientations and influences must be taken into account; as must folk forms, colonial patterns, bourgeois-native, radical/experimental and metropolitan/modern formations.”¹

3.3 A more current definition of Barbadian culture should also consider the impact of our physical environment, landscape and inherent ‘smallness’ on our “Barbadian-ness”. In the absence of a greater landmass and a wider array of natural resources, this has brought with it the innate cycle of dependency on foreign markets for goods and services, small market size, territoriality, and even escapism. These features need not be construed negatively as they have been balanced with a necessity of innovation, creativity and most of all, pragmatism. In other words, our history, environment and ancestry have all contributed to a culture that thrives on pragmatism.

3.4 The notion of pragmatism is reflected therefore in our approach to politics, economic management and social development. So, if we accept that Barbadian culture embraces and overrides all national systems then that notion of a Barbadian culture must not be limited only to how we articulate who we are in the arts, but also who we are as political, economic and social beings. Furthermore, the size-limitation of 166 square miles is becoming less relevant as we move towards the reality of a single economic space in the Caribbean Community. Therefore, a cultural examination of who we are and will be in the 21st century and beyond, must account for a reality that is inclusive of the wider Caribbean and its potential impact on what has traditionally been thought of as an exclusively Barbadian space. Multiculturalism is a reality of Barbadian society today, so that the virtually racially

homogenous society of Brathwaite’s 1979 report must now be analyzed within a broader context of the coming together of various races, ethnicities and behaviors which now characterizes the Barbadian cultural experience.

3.5 Today’s world is characterized by the revolution in Information Technology. Present and future generations will not necessarily see themselves as purely Barbadian, since their world is strongly influenced by the impact of external mass media, the Internet and, consequently, instantaneous access to the rest of the world. Barbadians today are not limited by national boundaries; their world can be easily constructed and deconstructed in a virtual reality. Access to cyberspace means that they can conduct virtual, “real-time” conversations with others anywhere in the world, date online, make purchases via the Internet, download movies from any source and watch them at their convenience.

3.6 All of this makes Lamming’s definition of culture very relevant and timeless. He sees it as:

“the variety of ways in which men and women interpret and translate, through the imagination, the meaning of that material existence in the light of their experience: religion, philosophy, art and the institutions which mediate their daily lives. All these...are influenced, in one way or another, by the circumstances of our material existence.”²

3.7 The challenge, therefore, is to prepare ourselves for emerging global citizenry without losing the sense of being Barbadian, inculcating a sense of national pride and confidence in our culture and in who we are. Any appropriate definition of culture in this age of modernity must recognize the

¹ Edward Kamau Brathwaite, *Bajan Culture Report & Plan*, UNESCO/Ministry of Culture, Barbados, 1979, p.4

² Quoted by Dr. Glenford Howe in *Country Cultural System Profile: Barbados*, UNESCO/National Cultural Foundation, p. 24.

fluidity and dynamism of an increasingly globalized and borderless world in which the concept of “nation” is constantly being threatened. This notwithstanding, it is critical that Barbadians be encouraged to be proud of things which are uniquely Barbadian and which most aptly reflect our own culture and identity, rather than identify and promote cultures of the richer countries as being of superior value.

“Present and future generations will not necessarily see themselves as purely Barbadian, since their world is strongly influenced by the impact of external mass media, the Internet and, consequently, instantaneous access to the rest of the world.”

4. The Methodology and Fashioning of a Barbadian Cultural Policy - the Consultative Process

4.1 Over the years, there have been a number of consultations and studies on culture, at both the local and regional levels. The policy formulation process has therefore been informed by recommendations emanating from the following:

- the Regional Cultural Policy of the Caribbean Community, 1997;
- National Consultations on Culture of 1996 and 2002;
- the establishment of the National Task Force on Cultural Industries and the reports generated by this body;
- diverse studies and surveys produced by SALISES, the University of the West Indies, The National Cultural Foundation, CARICOM, and other cultural agencies within Barbados on Culture and on Cultural Industries.



Section of Barbados National Youth Orchestra – NCF

4.2 The National Consultation on Culture in 1996 was organized by what was then the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture. The main objectives of this Consultation were to give a focus to cultural development in Barbados over the next ten to fifteen years, identify the actions which needed to be taken with regard to cultural development, and make proposals for the formulation of a National Policy on Culture.

4.3 Some of the recommendations that emerged from the proceedings have been implemented as follows:

- the establishment of a system for the recognition and honoring of National Heroes;
- the restoration of Emancipation Day as a National Holiday;
- the introduction of an Associate Degree in Music and Performing Arts at Barbados Community College;
- the setting up of a National Art Gallery Committee (NAGC) to coordinate the establishment of a National Art Gallery.

4.4 Another National Cultural Consultation in 2002 was held with a theme that embraced a broad understanding of what culture is, especially as it relates to national development on a social, political and economic basis. The major areas of discussion were cultural diversity, cultural heritage, cultural industries and cultural trade. During this consultation, deliberations ensued regarding the economic contribution of the cultural industries and the many challenges the sector faces in Barbados. Such challenges included issues of a political, organizational/managerial,

financial and technological nature, as well as sectoral linkages.

4.5 Among the goals achieved by this Consultation were:

- the provision of a forum in which all cultural development stakeholders could exchange views and share information;
- mapping out a framework for further meetings among the differing constituents within the cultural sector;
- setting out a framework for how ministries, agencies and partners in the cultural sector should inter-link as it relates to cultural development;
- setting out a timetable toward the formulation of an official National Policy on Culture to go before Cabinet/Parliament;
- developing a framework for carrying out a comprehensive study of culture, to determine the economic impact/contribution of culture and how best investment and capital injections into cultural industries should be made; and
- preparing a statement from all the stakeholders on cultural development making specific recommendations for action and a concrete timetable for the implementation of actions.

4.6 These various consultations and studies have made it clear that a Barbadian cultural policy must be informed primarily by the following:

- an honest and open discussion on our history and the role it has played in defining our present reality;

- the cultural and artistic manifestations that demonstrate our uniqueness as a people;
- a critical analysis of who we are as a people and where we are going;
- contributions from all participants in what is defined as the “cultural milieu”.

5. *Objectives of the National Cultural Policy*

5.1 A national cultural policy must be seen as an instrument which aims at empowering Barbadians to be free to develop their innate creativity to the fullest and at creating strategies to promote self-confidence, a sense of responsibility for their own lives and for their country. It must seek, in the words of the Caribbean Regional Cultural Policy, to ensure that our people become

“full, unapologetic, self-confident, human beings, capable of embracing and accessing the wealth in our diversity in language, religion, art and technology.”³

5.2 Its main objective must be the creation of a fully developed Barbadian person, a person who is able confidently to take his or her place at the centre of his or her development.

5.3 But what would be the characteristics of this Barbadian person whom government would seek to create? The defining of these characteristics will be informed by the desired attributes of a Caribbean person as articulated in the CARICOM Regional Cultural Policy. This Policy states:

“We passionately desire that the Caribbean Person:

- a. will be imbued with a respect for human life since it is the foundation on which all the other values must rest;
- b. of whatever particular ethnic group, religious or other adherence will accept and respect the existence of persons of other ethnic groups, religious beliefs, other ways of being, will indeed see this diversity as a source of potential strength and richness;
- c. will be aware of the importance of living in harmony with the environment;
- d. will have a strong appreciation of family and kinship values in all their various forms, community cohesion, and moral issues in general;
- e. will have an appreciation of and respect for the elders in our society not only as repositories of past knowledge, but as persons who can continue to contribute to the present shaping of ourselves in new and vital ways;
- f. will have an informed respect for the cultural heritage, for the beliefs, practices and persons of the past who have helped to create and maintain our sense of ourselves as a people;
- g. will nevertheless value independent and critical thinking and be sufficiently analytical to question the beliefs and practices of past and present;
- h. will value the creative imagination in its various manifestations and nurture its development in all areas of life.

5.4 It is such a Barbadian citizen who, confident in his or her identity, and proud of his or her heritage, will be equipped, physically, emotionally and intellectually, to utilize the gift of innate creativity to forge for him

³ CARICOM Regional Cultural Policy

or herself a place at the centre of his or her own development.

5.5 Specifically, therefore, the main objectives of this national cultural policy for Barbados are:

- a) To make culture an integral part of national development.
- b) To promote in all Barbadians a greater sense of national unity, confidence and self-sufficiency.
- c) To refine and strengthen Barbadian identity, inculcating a strong sense of national pride, while recognizing and showing respect for cultural and ethnic diversity.
- d) To encourage and facilitate positive creative expression among communities, recognizing this as pivotal to cultural development.
- e) To promote respect for and preservation of Barbados' cultural heritage.
- f) To facilitate the development of cultural institutions and museums.
- g) To create an inter-sectoral approach to cultural development, establishing viable linkages with other key sectors, such as Education, Tourism, Finance, Environment, Trade, Foreign Affairs Agriculture, Health, Science and Technology, and the Media.



Dancers performing Barbadian Ritual – NCF

- h) To establish an infrastructure which will facilitate the development of the economic potential of the culture sector, promoting cultural industries and entrepreneurship and emphasizing the importance of Intellectual Property.
- i) To strengthen the existing bonds between the public and private sectors to create and sustain a durable and dynamic partnership in the promotion of positive cultural development.
- j) To provide for on-going cultural research and documentation.
- k) To identify strategies for the funding of cultural activities.

6. *The Role of the Government*

- 6.1 It is the role of government to promote and to facilitate positive cultural development, dictating the direction and the speed of this development.
- 6.2 In this context therefore, Government will seek to provide an infrastructure which will facilitate and encourage the fullest, positive creative expression among all Barbadians and which will also facilitate and promote the development of the economic potential of the culture sector.



Aerial view of the Parliament Buildings – Willie Alleyne Associates

7. The Framework

7.1 This cultural policy is articulated within the following framework:

- a. Barbados in the Global Arena
- b. Culture and National Development
- c. Promoting a Culture of Excellence
- d. Promoting National Pride and Identity
- e. Cultural Diversity
- f. Cultural Heritage Preservation and Protection
- g. Culture, Trade and the Cultural Industries
- h. Culture and Education
- i. Culture and Tourism
- j. Culture and Sports
- k. Culture and Agriculture
- l. Culture and Health
- m. Culture and Technology
- n. Culture and the Mass Media
- o. Implementation and Review



Annual Ceremonial Parade of Members of Parliament, 20th Century – (unknown)

8. Barbados in the Global Arena

8.1 There is a saying that anywhere in the world one goes, one will find a Barbadian. Barbadians have indeed made a name for themselves all over the world. They helped to construct the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Panama Canal. They were a significant force in the creation of the modern London Transport System. They worked in all capacities in the United States of America. They were teachers and policemen in places like the Bahamas, in Trinidad and Tobago, in Bermuda, and across the Caribbean. And everywhere that Barbadians went, they earned for themselves a reputation for being a hard-working, dependable, law-abiding, resourceful people of integrity.

8.2 But all the time, these people retained their Barbadian identity, their distinctive accent, cherishing their culture, subscribing to the values instilled in them in their homeland. Their commitment to their homeland has been manifested by their faithful remittances which have for years made a significant contribution to the national economy. It is therefore critical that we make sure that Barbadians in the Diaspora are able to continue to contribute to the development of Barbados, and that appreciation for their efforts is made clear.

8.3 Barbados has also played a leading role in regional and international organizations, representing its positions in an impartial but forceful way, and gaining respect in fora like the United Nations, the Organization of American States. Government will therefore ensure that Barbados continues to make a contribution in this regard, and to highlight the case for developing countries and for Small Island Developing States.

Policy Goals

- a. To embrace Barbadians in the Diaspora, encouraging and facilitating their active involvement in Barbadian cultural life.
- b. To develop strategies for free and open dialogue with Barbadians overseas, involving them in the process of strengthening our communities and of overall national development.
- c. To continue to ensure effective representation in international fora where appropriate.

“...everywhere that Barbadians went, they earned for themselves a reputation for being a hard-working, dependable, law-abiding, resourceful people of integrity.

9. *Culture and National Development*

- 9.1 “Development divorced from its human or cultural context is growth without a soul. Economic development in its full flowering is a part of a people’s culture.”

“It is meaningless to talk of the ‘relation between culture and development’ as if they were two separate concepts, since development and the economy are part of, or an aspect of, a people’s culture.”

These two quotations, which very aptly articulate the importance of Culture in National Development, were taken from “Our Creative Diversity”, the Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development (UNESCO 1995). Indeed, there is no longer any doubt that developmental strategies which do not take into account the culture of the people, are destined to fail. Culture and our cultural policy must therefore inform all initiatives for national development.

Policy Goal

To ensure an inter-sectoral approach to national development which will take into account at all levels the cultural realities of our people.



Conservator Restoring Grantley Adams Sculpture at Government Headquarters, Bay Street

“Development divorced from its human or cultural context is growth without a soul. Economic development in its full flowering is a part of a people’s culture.”

10. Promoting a Culture of Excellence

- 10.1 Over the years, Barbadians have proved themselves to be exemplars of excellence in many areas of endeavour both at home and abroad. Our National Heroes, for example, typify individuals who reached for, and achieved excellence in their respective fields. Names like the Honourable George Lamming, Kamau Brathwaite, Austin “Tom” Clarke, are all literary icons who have received acclaim locally and internationally. Our most recently appointed Cultural Ambassador, Rihanna, has brought the name of Barbados on to the global centre-stage.
- 10.2 In this modern world, a world in which the demand for instant gratification predominates, achieving excellence is often seen as requiring too much effort and exertion. Barbadians have fallen down in their ability to provided excellence in service delivery, in the execution of their jobs. The National Initiative on Service Excellence (NISE) was established to encourage Barbadians to practice excellence in the delivery of services, but it is that strategies be implemented which will encourage Barbadians to reject the acceptance of mediocrity as the norm, and to embrace instead a culture of excellence,

seeking to strive always for excellence in everything that they do.

Policy Goals

- a. To encourage and support the provision of institutions which are charged with responsibility for identifying Barbadians who demonstrate exceptional talent in the arts and training them in the tradition of excellence.
- b. To encourage and to support programmes and projects (from both the public and private sectors) which are aimed at encouraging the pursuit of excellence.
- c. To provide and support opportunities for Barbadian artists to be exposed to excellence in foreign cultures by supporting appropriate cultural exchanges and co-production agreements.
- d. To ensure the protection of the Intellectual Property Rights of our artists and rights-holders.

“...it is that strategies be implemented which will encourage Barbadians to reject the acceptance of mediocrity as the norm, and to embrace instead a culture of excellence, seeking to strive always for excellence in everything that they do.

11. Promoting National Pride and Identity

In order to bring about the total subjugation of the enslaved Africans, the colonial powers set about to destroy their culture, their way of life. But the most damaging and enduring strategy was employed after the official abolition of the slave trade. Adeptly using their European educational and religious institutions, the values, norms, beliefs, and family structure of the newly emancipated people were systematically discredited and discarded. This resulted in Barbadians of African descent regarding their culture and their heritage with a sense of shame and embarrassment. This is a situation from which we are in the process of recovering even today.

Policy Goals

- a. To promote and support initiatives aimed at restoring and sustaining among Barbadians a sense of national pride and confidence in our African heritage.
- b. To promote among all Barbadians, and among our youth in particular, a desire to identify and to embrace the positive and uplifting aspects of our African heritage.

12. Cultural Diversity

- 12.1 Unlike some of the other territories in the region, Barbados' population has traditionally comprised mainly people of African descent, with a small percentage of persons of European origin. Today, however, multiculturalism has replaced the previous homogeneity of Barbadian society, and our cultural experience is now characterized by the coming together of various races and ethnicities. Barbadians have always had a reputation for being

warm and welcoming to those who choose to make our island their home, but the increase in numbers of immigrants to our shores, occasioned primarily by changing economic situations across the region, as well as the forces of globalization, has the potential to challenge the harmony which has hitherto existed in our communities.

- 12.2 Our major challenge in this regard, therefore, is to retain the sense of being Barbadian, while at the same time preparing ourselves for emerging global citizenry and affording each ethnic community the right to express and promote its unique identity and culture.

Policy Goals

- a. To promote and encourage opportunities which will allow the various communities in Barbados to highlight their cultural expressions.
- b. To promote and to encourage cultural exchange programmes with countries of the Caribbean and the rest of the world, with a view to promoting greater understanding of and respect for the diversity of cultures.
- c. To implement and support programmes aimed at the teaching of Barbadians communication in foreign languages, particularly in Spanish and French.
- d. To provide and to support opportunities for Barbadians, especially the young ones, to interact with foreign cultures.
- e. To implement and to support the terms and conditions of the UNESCO Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.



13. Cultural Heritage Preservation and Protection

13.1 Our cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, represents the legacy left to us by our ancestors, and it is what we, in turn, keep in trust for those who will come after us. Ours is a heritage of which we can be justly proud. It reflects not only our experiences as a colony but also embraces those aspects of our culture which were brought across the Middle Passage, and those which we, through the years, have forged for ourselves and which therefore make our heritage truly Barbadian.

13.2 While our cultural heritage is specific to Barbados, it must be recognized that it is nevertheless but one component of the global collective memory of human responses to life and as such, it is a shared

heritage. It is therefore important that we seek, for instance, the return of our patrimony from the former colonial powers and that we take steps to protect, preserve and to disseminate information about the traditional, historical and natural aspects of our culture.

13.3 Our Museums must be developed and maintained, as it is these institutions which will preserve for present and future generations

13.4 Barbados is proud to be signatory to UNESCO's seven standard-setting international conventions for the protection and preservation of cultural heritage. These are:

- The Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005)
- The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003)



The Screw Dock, Pierhead, Bridgetown

- The Convention for the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001)
- The Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972)
- The Convention for the Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Cultural Property (1970)
- The Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954)
- Universal Copyright Convention (1952, 1971)

13.5 The various components of our cultural heritage include:

- Language and our Oral Tradition*
 - Religion*
 - Natural, Archaeological and Historical Sites and Relics*
- Language and our Oral Tradition

While acknowledging the vital need for our people to be able to converse in standard English, we nevertheless recognize and respect the critical role of our national dialect in shaping cultural identity. This dialect has been created by our people over the years and very colourfully and accurately reflects the ways in which we relate to each other and to the world around us. One of the defining characteristics of our Bajan cultural identity is our strong oral tradition, passed down from generation to generation, of values and beliefs, of folk stories, of myths and cryptic and often amusing adages and proverbs.

b. Religion

Barbados, though predominantly a Christian nation, is becoming increasingly home to people of many different faiths. We will ensure that they all feel welcome and that there is respect and tolerance for all religions. Nevertheless, even within established



Swan Street, 2010

denominations, Barbadians have developed their own unique ways of worshipping. Also worthy of note is the Spiritual Baptist Church, a sect which has retained much of our connections to the religions which our ancestors practiced in Africa. These are traditions which should be preserved, even as we embrace other influences and adopt new traditions.

c. Natural, Archaeological and Historical Sites and Relics

The preservation of our natural and built heritage is of prime importance, as their historical and economic value is of great significance. As we seek to develop our cultural and heritage tourism sectors, our natural and cultural heritage sites must be developed and preserved. They reflect the story of history, of our journey from Africa, through enslavement and eventually to our modern independent state.

Barbadians must be taught to value and respect their heritage sites and institutions, and in this regard to develop a sense of ownership. We must continue to highlight not only the Great Houses and the plantations, but also these sites and structures which reflect the reality of our history as slaves.

Policy Goals

- a. To implement the terms and conditions of the International Conventions for the protection and preservation of the cultural heritage.
- b. To enact and to implement legislation aimed at the preservation of our cultural heritage, including our natural and cultural heritage structures, monuments and sites and relics of cultural value.
- c. To support, where possible, the maintenance and upgrading of the country's museums.
- d. To support and to identify resources for the upgrading of the National Library Service and the Department of Archives.
- e. To support and encourage research into and documentation of Barbadian English usage and into our folk traditions, and in this regard, to continue to support the Caribbean Lexicography Programme of the University of the West Indies.
- f. To recognize the incalculable value of and take steps to ensure the protection and preservation of Barbados' oral tradition as a living repository of information, beliefs and values.
- g. To recognize the fact that religious pluralism is now a characteristic of Barbadian society, and to promote opportunities for dialogue and mutual understanding among people of different faiths and beliefs.
- h. To carry out research into traditional religious practices in Barbados, particularly those which emerged from our African heritage.
- i. To provide appropriate incentives to encourage the involvement of the private sector in the development and preservation of heritage monuments, sites and structures.
- j. To update and to maintain Barbados' list of heritage monuments, sites and structures.
- k. To collaborate with the relevant governmental and non-governmental agencies to promote programmes and projects aimed at encouraging among Barbadians, especially among our

young people, a love and respect for their cultural heritage.

1. To implement programmes for the training of members of the Judiciary, the Police Department, Customs Officers and other relevant persons in order to equip them to deal with issues related to the illicit trafficking in cultural goods.

“...a well-developed cultural sector has both the ability to capture the expressions of people’s imagination with its products and services, as well as the potential to generate meaningful employment for individuals and provide opportunities for earning significant foreign exchange.”

14. Culture, Trade and the Cultural industries

- 14.1 It is acknowledged that a well-developed cultural sector has both the ability to capture the expressions of people’s imagination with its products and services, as well as the potential to generate meaningful employment for individuals and provide opportunities for earning significant foreign exchange. The cultural industries, therefore, must be seen as a tool

and vehicle for positive social and economic development.

- 14.2 Global statistics attest to the vast economic potential of the cultural industries and also highlight the fact that despite the cultural richness of the developing countries, the industrialized West and Japan have been the major beneficiaries of the wealth generated by the cultural industries. It is therefore important that Government take steps to change the traditional view of culture as a ‘soft’ sector and that it be included in mainstream economic activity and as such, treated as a dynamic catalyst in the development of the diversified economy.

- 14.3 Of primary importance will be the issue of Intellectual Property rights, as these rights will be the basis of the revenue-generating potential of the cultural industries.

- 14.4 In the development of our cultural industries, and in our negotiations in respect of trade agreements, we must take every opportunity to acknowledge the unique nature of cultural goods and services, and to see them as not mere commodities, but as bearers of culture, vehicles of identity, values and meaning.

- 14.5 The reality is that the true potential of our cultural products, the products of our artistic creativity, remains under-exploited, and are seldom adequately represented by our Ministries of Trade in the conceptualization of our trade and investment programmes and policies. It is critical that in our relationship with the WTO, the GATT and GATS, the true value of cultural goods and services is acknowledged and that Ministries of Trade collaborate with Ministries of Culture to ensure that appropriate strategies are put in place for the fullest possible development of our cultural industries and at the same time, for the promotion and preservation of the Barbadian cultural identity.

Policy Goals

- a. To ensure collaboration between the Ministry of Trade and the Ministry of Culture in deliberations and negotiations on trade and investment in cultural goods and services.
- b. To provide resources for the production and distribution on a commercial scale, of cultural goods and services.
- c. To formulate and implement a policy geared specifically at the development of the cultural industries and which recognizes the unique quality of cultural goods and services as vehicles of identity, values and meaning.
- d. To enact appropriate legislation to govern the development of this sector, offering appropriate incentives to encourage increased involvement of the private sector in this area.
- e. To establish within the education system programmes aimed at promoting careers in the area of culture and the arts, and emphasizing such subjects as business and entrepreneurship and the importance of Intellectual Property.

15. Culture and Education

- 15.1 Barbados has always been well known for the high quality of its education system. It was a system inherited from the British colonial powers and one which sought to ensure that Barbadians of African descent rejected their traditional values and norms in favour of those espoused by the British. Even though in global terms our education system is still one of which we can be proud, there are obvious challenges with which we must deal. Too many of our young people are failing to engage with the present system of education, and are

emerging from primary and even from secondary schools, with a very low level of literacy. The questions to be answered are: “Is our system of education relevant to our society? Is it meeting adequately the needs of our society?”

- 15.2 The role of education is critical to the development of the creative imagination of our people, a creative imagination which is vital not only for artistic achievements, but for developing in our citizens the ability to solve problems and to be innovative in all areas of endeavour. Education must also cause the individual to come face to face with him or herself, providing an opportunity for an understanding of self. It should not just be about academic success, but should also seek to equip the individual with the necessary tools to function in life in an effective and meaningful way. Education should be a tool of empowerment for the individual.
- 15.3 Young people in modern Barbados are intimately involved in cultural activities – through television, popular music, and the Internet – and these activities have their origins predominately in foreign cultures. It is therefore critical that we take steps to integrate “Culture” into our education system. We must integrate studies and activities which will bring to all Barbadians, and in particular to our young people, a greater understanding and appreciation of who they are, of our traditional values and norms.

Policy Goals

- a. To create effective synergies between Education and Cultural policies.
- b. To encourage greater integration of cultural and artistic activities in the education curricula in order to ensure that the system is made more relevant to the needs of our society.

- c. To ensure that areas of study in the field of culture and heritage (e.g. Performing, Literary and Visual Arts, Conservation, Library Science, Archives Management, etc.) are adequately included in the national scholarships and awards.
- d. To ensure greater use of culture and the arts in dealing with societal and behavioural problems among youth.
- e. To support programmes that promote a greater understanding of other cultures, and respect for cultural diversity.

“It should not just be about academic success, but should also seek to equip the individual with the necessary tools to function in life in an effective and meaningful way.”

16. Culture and Tourism

- 16.1 Tourism makes a significant contribution to the economy of Barbados. At the same time, it must be recognized that Tourism, if not properly managed, has the potential to threaten our very culture and identity, and the integrity of our communities. It is very clear that in a world in which travel is simple and easy, it is no longer enough for us to highlight the sun, sand and sea in the marketing of our tourism product. It is important that we recognize the extent to which a large portion of the global community now has a greater interest in

the culture, the heritage of the destinations of choice.

- 16.2 In developing a high quality tourism product, there is the potential to enhance, rather than compromise, our culture. In addition to the sheer physical beauty of our island, there is a need to capitalize on all the other things that Barbados has to offer – the warmth of its people, the versatility and genius of its artists, the charm of its heritage, both tangible and intangible. Barbadians must embrace the policy of highlighting to the world the beauty of who we are, rather than trying to recreate ourselves into a people that we perceive that tourists want us to be. Our tourism product must be authentic and must preserve the integrity of our Barbadian culture.

- 16.3 Culture and Tourism are inseparable, and the notion that “Tourism is our Business” should be emphasized. If our tourism industry is to develop and to be sustained, then all Barbadians must be encouraged to feel a sense of involvement.

Policy Goals

- a. To ensure that there is on-going collaboration between the Ministries of Culture and Tourism.
- b. To ensure that greater emphasis is placed on our culture and heritage in traditional Tourism programmes.
- c. To promote programmes which will allow all Barbadians to be involved in Barbados’ tourism industry.
- d. To promote high quality and varied cultural activities so that Barbados can be promoted as a tourist destination which is truly a “cultural centre” in the region.

17. Culture and Sports

- 17.1 The role played by sports in Caribbean integration has long been recognized. On the cricket field, in the athletics arena, one can see as in no other area, expressions of Caribbean collective cultural identity.
- 17.2 It must be acknowledged that the way in which we play sports, and the type of games we play, the type of leisure activities in which we involve



Bronze Statue of Right Excellent Sir Garfield Sobers, National Hero – Sculpted by Karl and Virgil Broodhagen

ourselves, are also very much expressions of our culture. Many of our traditional leisure activities are in danger of disappearing completely and are being replaced by activities imported from foreign cultures. In this regard, it is important that we seek to highlight once again these traditional activities, and that we document them for future generations.

Policy Goals

- To ensure collaboration between the Ministries of Culture and Sports.
- To promote programmes aimed at developing the highest possible standard of sporting activity.
- To promote and support on-going programmes which will expose our young people to traditional sports and leisure activities, especially those which promote and reflect positive values and norms.

“On the cricket field, in the athletics arena, one can see as in no other area, expressions of Caribbean collective cultural identity.”

18. Culture and Agriculture

- 18.1 For many years, agriculture was the major source of economic activity in the region. Many fundamental beliefs, attitudes and practices have developed around our agricultural activities. The recent movement away from agriculture has been brought about as a result of the unpalatable

associations between agriculture and slavery, the connotations of back-breaking labour and inhumane treatment of our people and also as a result of the effects of globalization and its revolutionary technological developments. In spite of all of this, there is a need for us to move towards greater self-sufficiency in food production, as the cost of importing food is constantly rising.

- 18.2 We also have to take into account the fact that an increasing number of tourists, particularly those who are interested in eco-tourism, are looking for destinations which produce their own foods, destinations in which they can consume products which have not been grown in some distant part of the world.

Policy Goals

- a. To encourage research into the evaluation and effect of the beliefs and practices surrounding agricultural activity over the years.
- b. To support the recognition of the importance of these beliefs and practices in designing and implementing modern agricultural programmes.
- c. To promote programmes and projects aimed at encouraging increased production of local foods and the use of these foods in the tourism industry.

19. Culture and Health

- 19.1 The social and economic well-being of our society depends to a large extent on the state of health of our population. Modern lifestyles, which are characterized by sedentary occupations, leisure pursuits which require little or no physical activity, and the lure of the fast-food phenomenon which has changed our eating habits from the traditionally healthy foods of previous generations, have resulted in the rise of chronic diseases, even among our youth.



Barbadian delicacy, fish cakes – NCF

- 19.2 Our fore-parents, while not as versed in modern health sciences as we are today, nevertheless had some knowledge of health practices by which many of them managed to maintain good health.

Policy Goals

- a. To support research into traditional medicines and into strategies used by our fore-parents to deal with health issues.
- b. To promote programmes aimed at encouraging our people to embrace healthy lifestyles.

“...an increasing number of tourists, particularly those who are interested in eco-tourism, are looking for destinations which produce their own foods...”

20. Culture and Technology

- 20.1 Globalization's new information and communications technologies have challenged directly traditional ways of doing things. Yet, technological advancement is essential to overall national development. It is a sad reality that developing countries continue to lag behind in this area, and that attempts to bridge the technological divide have not been as successful as they should be. Barbados, however, has been fortunate in that it has been able to make considerable advances over the years. There is, however, still much more to be done, especially in so far as the culture sector is concerned. Our artists and cultural practitioners need to be *au courant* with the latest developments and

to be well versed in how technology can enhance their products and services.

Policy Goals

- a. To promote widespread knowledge of and access to modern computer technology through support for school and community based programmes and projects such as the Community Technology Programme.
- b. To promote the implementation of technology programmes designed specifically for persons involved in culture and the arts.

“...technological advancement is essential to overall national development.”

21. Culture and the Mass Media

- 21.1 Since the end of colonialism, the media have largely replaced religious and educational institutions as the main controllers of symbolic power. “Symbolic” or “soft” power” is that brand of power that is the most potent and pervasive and which has the potential to have longer-lasting effects than say, military power. It is characterized by the manipulation of signs, of symbolic forms, of value systems. It is from this position of power, therefore, that media and communications are filling our imaginations, sometimes in very negative ways, propelling the processes of globalization, bearing in their wake the threat of the creation of a Caribbean person who “has less and less loyalty to, feeling for and identification with his or her history and environment and little belief in his or

her ability to create economic prosperity in an authentic, many-faceted culture.”⁴

21.2 Over the years, what is being subtly reinforced in the region is that our small size, the nature of our population and the economic realities of the world, the most we can hope to contribute to our own development is our labour, environment and our people. In addition, issues created by international trade agreements, and the resultant exacerbation of the inherent conflict between cultural development and an open economy, stringencies and social dislocations attendant on structural adjustment, the hegemony engendered by mass communications media, are among the factors which have a negative impact. Images in the media, and hence in our imagination, suggest that wealth, grandeur and accomplishment are unattainable by communities such as ours. A national cultural policy must therefore be aimed at giving Barbadians the self confidence to express their innate creativity and at encouraging a fresh enthusiasm for them to address challenges at home and within the region.

21.3 There is no doubt that the mass media in today's world is doing much to alter local traditional cultures. The media – radio, television, the Internet – have replaced the home, the Church, the school, in shaping our ideas, defining our values, and in determining how we see ourselves. Our young people, in particular, are being bombarded daily by foreign influences and value systems, and while we would not want to exclude foreign cultures, it is nevertheless important that we seek to highlight and to strengthen our own traditional values and beliefs, and to teach our youth how to make informed decisions about what influences they absorb.

21.4 It is important that steps be taken to ensure that we see more of ourselves, of who we are, reflected on our television screens, in our cinemas, on the Internet. In this regard, therefore, the volume of local media productions should be increased, and their quality enhanced.

Policy Goals

- a. To promote and to support the production of high quality local programmes for radio and television.
- b. To promote and to support the development of a local film industry.
- c. To ensure that there is a minimum of 60% local content in our radio and television programmes.

22. Implementation and Review

22.1 As important as the formulation of a national cultural policy, is the defining of a process for its implementation. There must also be a process for this policy to be reviewed on a regular basis in order to ensure that it remains relevant and practical in relation to the needs of our society.

22.2 In this regard, Government will:

- a. Direct the Ministry responsible for Culture to collaborate with the National Cultural Foundation and with other relevant agencies, both governmental and non-governmental, to develop strategies for the implementation of the National Cultural Policy.
- b. Provide for a comprehensive review of the policy within a period of five years.

⁴ Regional Cultural Policy of the Caribbean Community, (1997) Caribbean Community Secretariat, p.10



Young Steel Pannist



Independence Day Parade – Barbados Defence Force



A Barbadian Tuk Band – Barbados Government Information Service





Ministry of Community Development and Culture

1st Floor, Warrens Office Complex
Warrens St. Michael
BARBADOS

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