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NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 152

Dominican Republic participates in international symposium on the fight against climate change

Dominican Republic participated in the discussion panel on the role of technology in the fight against climate change, a conference held as part of the 13th Symposium on Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), Environment and Climate Change held at the headquarters of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), in the city of Geneva, Switzerland.

In regards to this panel, which was moderated by the Dominican Ambassador Katrina Naut, the country works towards increasing its presence in the organizations and meetings in which decisions are made on the major issues that affect and make an impact in the region.

The symposium brought together industry experts, politicians, representatives of the ICT sector, international organizations, scholars, and other interested parties, who shared their experience and discussed the latest trends in the use of artificial intelligence and other cutting-edge technologies to develop innovative climate solutions, as well as to move towards a circular economy.

The objective of this symposium is to raise awareness of the potential that ICTs have to face environmental challenges and to encourage stakeholders to include solutions based on existing and emerging technologies in their activities for a more sustainable future for humanity.

Katrina Naut is the Permanent Representative of the Dominican Republic to the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Also, for the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.

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NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 153

Health tourism generated more than US \$265 million during 2018

Health tourism in the Dominican Republic generated an average income of more than US \$265 million during 2018, exceeding 2017 with more than US \$34 million. Which means that in 2018 there was an economic spillover of more than DOP \$13.3 billion, and for 2017 of more than DOP \$11.1 billion, amounts that include the average total quantification of the expenses incurred by the international patients, when receiving medical services in the country, according to Diario Libre. This is stated in the “Study and Diagnosis of Health Tourism in the DR”, presented by the Dominican Association of Health Tourism (ADTS). It also says that in infrastructure and medical technology, the investment exceeds 500 million dollars.

The figures do not include wellness tourism, which represented an average growth of 15% for the health tourism segment and 7% for the regular tourists’ medical attention segment compared to 2017. Also, the research reveals that a total of 69,550 foreigners were attended for normal tourist’s medical attention, a modality that consists in providing emergency services, urgency or consultations to tourists who during their visit to the country experience some unforeseen medical condition. Some 47,725 people visited the country for medical tourism purposes, according to the study sponsored by the National Competitiveness Council.

During the presentation of this research, they highlighted the national development strategy for the sector, as well as the “Seal of Quality” proposal for health tourism providers, which represents a strategic alliance between health and tourism.

The activity, which took place at the Real Intercontinental Hotel, was attended by the Ministers of Tourism and Public Health, Francisco Javier García and Rafael Sánchez Cárdenas, respectively. In addition, the Director of the National Council of Competitiveness, Rafael Paz, Dr. Alejandro Cambiaso, President of the ADTS; Paola Rainieri, President of the Association of Hotels and Tourism (Asonahores), among others.

They indicated that to strengthen the development and growth of health tourism, they took into consideration ten challenges related to the “regulatory and incentive framework, health and wellness centers under international standards, technology and portability of medical information, competitive human resources, sustainable promotion of the destination, potential for investment maximization, quality and security of the tourist attractions and complementary services, governmental action, accessibility, and bilingualism”.

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NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 154

The Dominican Republic has the capacity to export 500,000 boxes of bananas weekly

The banana industry of the Dominican Republic generates about 300 million dollars each year and about 400,000 boxes are exported weekly, according to the Executive Director of the Dominican Association of Banana Producers (Adobanano), Julio César Estévez, who added that the country has the ability to export 500,000.

The banana industry generates more than 40,000 direct and indirect jobs.

Estevez spoke as part of the seventh edition of the Food, Tobacco and Beverages International Fair "Agroalimentaria 2019", where he assessed the importance of the activity and revealed that the industry he represents had the opportunity to work closely with buyers and providers of local and international services.

"We had contacts with representatives of 10 countries, who are interested in the Dominican banana. Among those countries are Brazil, Puerto Rico, Holland, France, and some of the islands in the region", he said.

The industry also has more than 1,850 producers grouped in 26 associations that are among our members, 23 exporters and several independent companies that are not affiliated with any association and generate about US \$300 million. He adds that there are 59,000 acres planted with bananas throughout the country.

He also added that so far this year the Dominican Republic has exported 103,828.3 metric tons of bananas to reach US \$62,296,800. He indicated that throughout 2018, about 327,638 tons were exported for US \$196,582,800.

The producers interviewed by the newspaper *Diario Libre* indicated that the fair has been a success because they have been able to make contact with producers and service providers at a national and international level, so they hope that in the next few days they can finalize the meetings held in this event, which was organized by the Export and Investment Center of the Dominican Republic (CEI-RD) along with the Junta Agroempresarial Dominicana (JAD).

Alfonso Torres, representative of the company World Agromarketing Dominicana, which have the Mama Mia brand, says that this year the fair organized by the JAD and the CEI-RD has been a success because they have brought very good buyers, there is a very good business perspective and we have very good expectations for exports.

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NEWS SHEET

EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 155

First official Dominican Film Showcase in Canada concludes with success

OTTAWA - After four days of screenings of Dominican films in cities of Canada, the first official Dominican Film Showcase concludes with broad acceptance. The event was organized by the Embassy of the Dominican Republic in Canada and the Ministry of Tourism, through its Office of Tourism in Montreal, with the sponsorship of the Directorate General of Cinema (DGCINE).

From May 28 to 31, 2019, a selection of renowned Dominican films was presented in Ottawa-Gatineau and in the city of Montreal. The free screenings gave film lovers and Spanish movies enthusiasts the opportunity to immerse themselves in Dominican films. The three films, "Juanita", "Colors" and "Hay un país en el mundo" were selected to show the diversity of the new Dominican cinema and offer members of the audience an idea about Dominican culture and life. Among the prominent figures of the film industry that attended the event were Leticia Tonos, Director and Producer of the film "Juanita" and Mr. José Rafael Sosa, renowned Dominican film critic, who was in charge of introducing the films "Colors" and "There is a country in the world".

As part of the activities, the colloquium "Promoting culture through films" was held, having as panelists Leticia Tonos, film director; Michael Dobbin, Canadian film producer, Peddy García, Director of the Film and Audiovisual Department of the Dominican Culture Commission in the United States; Sylvie Jasen, International Projects Coordinator at Carleton University; Alicia Mayer González, Director of the campus in Canada of the UNAM, and the film critic José Rafael Sosa, who, during his speech, affirmed that the relationship between films and culture is reciprocal since they transfer back and forth values, knowledge, attitudes, and other standards of behavior.

This was illustrated during the screening of the three Dominican films, which caused a wave of emotions in the audience, among both nationals and foreigners, who on multiple occasions applauded the productions and in the particular case of the Dominican viewers, many could not contain their tears of nostalgia and the feeling of pride that such productions woke up in them.

The Ambassador of the Dominican Republic in Canada, Pedro Vergés Ciman, thanked the audience for embracing with such a great enthusiasm the three Dominican films, which are a sign of the sense of commitment that many Dominican filmmakers have with providing high-quality productions, said the head of Mission.

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NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 156

Competitiveness Council and IDB present results of study and diagnosis of agricultural chains

In order to increase the competitiveness of the supply and quality of goods and services produced in the Dominican Republic and support the strategic plan of the agricultural sector, the National Competitiveness Council and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) presented the study and diagnosis of Agricultural Chains.

This study presents the results of the analysis of ten value chains for agricultural products in the Dominican Republic such as: avocado, cocoa, banana, coconut, mango, pineapple, greenhouse vegetables, oriental vegetables, passion fruit, and cassava.

According to the document issued, this first prioritization was carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture within the framework of the Productive Development measures, based on their export potential and their capacity to respond to local producers.

It states that the study is focused on two objectives, the first one is to deepen the knowledge of productive value chains and the second is to prioritize those with better prospects for industrialization and export potential, identifying potential export markets and preliminary proposals for the value chains selected.

The Executive Director of the Competitiveness Council, Rafael Paz, stated that according to official figures “the Dominican Republic exports more than USD \$2.6 billion in agricultural products. The country is a leading exporter of cigars and its derivatives, is a major exporter of organic produce, ranking as the number one organic banana exporter to the United Kingdom.

In addition, Paz highlighted that, from the Competitiveness Council, “we have taken on the task of uniting the business sector and the government sector, in an alliance that was essential, the public-private partnership, where we will drive progress towards a more sustainable economy, which will raise the status of the Dominican Republic before the rest of the world.

“This study is the frame of reference to know and understand the supply chains, to get the most out of them, to know what is the response capacity of the market based on the increase in demand and the social and environmental impact they generate”, he explained.

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NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 157

Researchers of PUCMM discover particle useful for nanomedicine

Breakthrough. The Dominican university Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra (PUCMM) announced on Tuesday the results of a research with high technological potential in medicine, electronics, and computing.

It is a new carbon nanomaterial called Diamano, which exhibits a high technological potential in different areas such as nanomedicine, nanoelectronics, and quantum computing.

The research group led by the French Dominican physicist, Fabrice Piazza, coordinator of the nanoscience laboratory of the PUCMM and Main researcher at the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (MESCYT), explained that in the area of Health Sciences, the Diamano could be the base material for the construction of nanoelectromechanical systems that will be incorporated in the human body to perform medical procedures, due to its mechanical properties, chemical inertness, and low necking coefficient.

In the area of electronics, the Diamano could replace silicon in the transistors of the new generations of chips for all electronic devices, and it can be used to configure qubits for quantum computing. On the other hand, this material could be used to create touch screens, cell phones, tablets, and computers with greater capacity and speed.

Currently, the team of researchers is working on obtaining greater Diamano surfaces, which could lead to the creation of a spin-off company to produce and export products with very high value added in the country. In this regard, PUCMM is looking for collaborators for the development of this important project that could have worldwide impact. The method used by the research group, led by the French Dominican physicist Fabrice Piazza, consists in a very attractive technology from a practical point of view, which could be implemented at an industrial level.

Nanoscience refers to the study of matter on a very small scale called nanometers, a measurement much smaller than the diameter of a human hair.

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NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 158

Hotel development doubles in five years in the Dominican Republic

The development of hotel projects in the Dominican Republic maintains an accelerated pace that has doubled its progress in the construction of new infrastructure, as can be seen in the growth during the last five years, 2014-2018, compared to the decade 2004 - 2013.

For the year 2004, the Caribbean nation had an inventory of 59,387 rooms that contributed to the generation of 171,478 jobs (48,994 direct and 122,484 indirect jobs). These figures increased 9,228 rooms in a decade, amounting to 68,406 in 2013 and generating 216,543 jobs in total (61,869 direct and 154,674 indirect jobs)

Then, from 2014 and until 2018, the boom in the development of hotel infrastructure, both new and renovations, has been one of the pillars for the progress experienced in the tourism industry of the Dominican Republic, which has had the intervention of various financial entities such as Banco Popular Dominicano (BPD), Banco de Reservas (Banreservas), BHD, Progreso, and others that have seen in recent years the business potential of such industry. Also, this development has had the participation of trusts projects, stock exchanges, insurance companies, and tour operators with investments in developers and hotel administrators.

In this manner, in 2014, the Dominican Republic ended with an inventory of 68,957 rooms employing 247,025 people, from this figure 70,578 were direct jobs and 176,447 indirect.

By 2018, the country already had nearly 80 thousand rooms - some reports mention a little more than this number - so when comparing what had been achieved previously in a decade, the same feat was achieved in only in five years, after adding about 9,609 rooms to reach, according to the official source consulted, a total of 78,599 rooms, generating in this way 336,479 jobs, of which 94,704 are direct and 241,775 indirect jobs.

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NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 159

FAO highlights poverty reduction in DR; will support government efforts in the Southern region

SANTO DOMINGO.-In the Dominican Republic, levels of hunger and poverty have declined consistently in recent years. Nationwide poverty has been reduced from almost 40% in 2003 to 25.5% in 2018.

This was announced by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), through a statement in which it also pledges a solidarity contribution to government efforts to eliminate hunger and take out of poverty 1,975 municipalities in Latin America.

Likewise, the agency assessed that “the Dominican Republic is one of the few countries in Latin America and the Caribbean that in 2015 met the goal number two of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), which is reducing by a half the percentage of the population that is undernourished”.

Lines of work

Carmelo Gallardo, Representative of FAO in the country, said that the Southern region has been prioritized by the Dominican Government in its initiatives and development activities.

“And for this reason, an international organization such as the FAO employs its experience and technical knowledge at the service of the government to promote the best public policies that reduce rural poverty”.

The supporting effort is oriented towards two lines of work:

- Execution of a rural development project together with the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development, and the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Providing support to the Ministry of Agriculture in the training of government officials who will develop, in the Southwest region, a new approach to train small-scale producers; and work with the Ministry of Women to elaborate an analysis of the value chains that have the most potential to improve the lives of rural women.

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NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 160

Master plan to promote Bahía de las Águilas would be ready in June

The master plan to launch Bahía de las Águilas and the Southern region as the new tourist pole of the Dominican Republic is expected to be ready in June.

The Minister of Finance, Donald Guerrero, informed on Wednesday that when the Canadian company that was hired for such purpose delivers the plan, a marketing company will be hired by public tender to promote investment in the area.

“We are sure that it will be well-received because even without having completed the master plan or the marketing campaign, there has been a lot of interest from the private sector in the area of Bahía de las Águilas de Pedernales due to the potential it has”, said the Minister while participating in the forum of public-private partnerships (PPP-Americas 2019) that was taking place in Punta Cana.

Guerrero took the opportunity to invite the participants in the forum to come again to the country to get to know “beyond Punta Cana” because the Dominican Republic has much more to offer.

The Minister highlighted the great potential of the South and said that the area is waiting to be exploited. He indicated that hopefully its development begins after we sign into law the bill on public-private partnerships that is expected to be approved this year.

The PPP Americas forum is a discussion even that is held for the first time in the country and brings together important representatives of the public and private sectors of Latin America and the Caribbean. It is organized by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and BID Invest.

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NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 161

Mondelēz International promotes agriculture and cocoa industry of the Dominican Republic

Mondelēz International, a multinational within the industries of confectionery, food and beverage, is promoting cocoa agriculture of the Dominican Republic through its Cocoa Life program, which promotes a sustainable cocoa supply for the company. The Dominican Republic is the tenth largest producer of cocoa in the world and is one of the world leaders in the production and export of organic cocoa.

Currently, 935 Dominican farmers from 24 communities across the country participate in the program. These farmers are trained by the company and given support to develop good agricultural practices in their farms. The program helps create a thriving cocoa supply chain by increasing yields on existing crops, as well as helping to strengthen cocoa-producing communities and prevent deforestation.

“I have seen a very marked progress in our Cocoa Life communities thanks to their teamwork and innovation. A great example is the creation of personal savings and loan groups where women represent 86% of the members. Thanks to our new partner, Fuparoca, our work now covers most of the cocoa growing area of the Dominican Republic. This is fantastic, and we hope to continue expanding our footprint and positive impact in the future”, said David Preece, leader of Cocoa Life in the Dominican Republic.

Mondelēz International announced this year its commitment of having, by the year 2025, its sustainability program Cocoa Life comprising the total volume of cocoa needed for all the chocolate brands of the company. Currently, 43% of the chocolate brands of Mondelēz International obtain their cocoa supply through this program. By 2025, the most emblematic international brands, such as Toblerone, will join Milka, Côte D'Or and Cadbury Dairy Milk in the exclusive supply of cocoa through Cocoa Life.

This expansion will result in an increase in the number of Mondelēz International farmers and communities receiving support in the six cocoa-producing countries: Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Indonesia, the Dominican Republic, India, and Brazil. In 2012, Mondelēz International pledged to invest US \$400 million in Cocoa Life for ten years to help build a thriving cocoa supply chain and empower local cocoa farmers to improve their strength.

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NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 162

Dominican exports to the European Union Strengthen

The January boost of exports from the Dominican Republic to the European Union was sustained throughout the first quarter of the year, a sign that the pace of growth could continue in double digits at the end of 2019.

The statistics recorded by Eurostat indicate that from January to March, the shipment of Dominican goods to that destination totaled €246 million, for a year-on-year increase of 25%. These results exceed by €20 million the second highest performance achieved for that period and are in contrast with the deceleration of 13% observed last year.

For the first time, the expansion of our exports is greater than the growth of imports from the EU. This fact coincides with the implementation of the package of initiatives to improve competitiveness and promote public-private partnerships.

It favors exports to a lesser extent than the real per capita income of the EU, which rose by 0.3% in the fourth quarter of 2018, while its consumption per per capita increased by 0.2%. The preliminary information on business consumption also indicates a positive trend.

Geographically, the shipping of goods to Dutch ports grew by an impressive 55% and to Germany by 40%. The latter is positioned as one of the main European receivers of national products, above other traditional trade partners, such as France and the United Kingdom, with which we experience a more modest growth.

The challenge continues to be reducing the marked persistent trade deficit, which amounted to €242 million. Although it is important to note that from January to March the accumulated coverage rate was 50%, five points above the 2018 average.

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NEWS SHEET

EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 163

Dominican destination considered as wonderful by Chinese visitors

A delegation from the People's Republic of China that visited the country recently, assessed as wonderful the country destination, indicating that more tourists from that Asian nation will come to the Caribbean country.

The commissioners, made up of tour operators, journalists, and influencers, had the objective of getting to know our country to promote it in China with the purpose of introducing this part of the Caribbean to their nationals, and presenting the country as a candidate to be chosen as their favorite long haul destination.

In that sense, Liao Yi, editor of QYER Inc., a tourism website from China, said that being in the Dominican Republic is a unique experience, since it offers a considerable variety of attractions, such as beaches, colonial architecture, culture and history, among many others things that would entice the interest of his countrymen.

“I like it a lot, I loved this country, its blue beaches, its colonial buildings, as well as its gastronomy, and the people are very nice”, Liao Yi said.

Meanwhile, Ming Nau Wu Chen, representative of the Chinese Youth Association in the Dominican Republic, who accompanied the delegation as interpreter, talked about the great level of satisfaction of the visitors regarding all the attractions of our country, expressing their interest in beaches, historical monuments, hotel infrastructure, culture, and the warmth treatment of Dominican towards tourists. “This visit, in addition to sightseeing, is a way to get to know the Dominican Republic to promote it in China and increase Chinese tourism in the country. I loved all the places that I visited, the colors of the Victorian houses and the living culture that this country has”, said Chen.

Led by Luo Weijian, researcher of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China, the delegation also included directors of the main tour operators, representatives of the most prestigious media, as well as influencers of the Asian country.

Likewise, the delegation also consisted of top executives of companies such as China International Culture Tour Co., Ltd, China Arts and Entertainment Group Ltd, Tong Cheng International Travel Service Co., Ltd, and China International Travel Shenzhen Co., Ltd. Also by GZL International Travel Service Ltd, CAISSA Travel Management Co., Ltd, China Comfort Tourism Group Co. Ltd, Ctrip Computer Technology (Shanghai) Co., Ltd, China Tourism News, QYER Inc., mafenwo.com, ctrip.com, among other native firms from the country.

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NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 164

Dominican Republic is chosen as the “Best Destination in Latin America” by PriceTravel Trophy

The Dominican Republic was recognized as the “Best Destination in Latin America” in the PriceTravel Trophy, which are awarded each year by the Mexican tour operator PriceTravel Holding to the greatest performers of the tourism industry. In this seventh edition, the country won the award due to the excellent growth that the destination has experienced in all the sales channels of the wholesale agency. According to the tourist barometer of the Ministry of Tourism, during the first quarter of 2019, the arrival of Mexican travelers increased by 54.1% in relation to the same period of 2018, becoming the country with the highest growth of visitors.

“We are very happy with the results we have achieved. Throughout 2018, we sustained a constant growth of Mexican tourists who visited one of our destinations in the Dominican Republic and in 2019 we continued on an upward trend thanks to the support of all our allies within the tourism industry who have bet and believed in the potential of this market for our country,” said Carolina Pérez, Director of the Office of Tourism Promotion (OPT) of the Dominican Republic in Mexico.

Each year, the PriceTravel Holding company awards the PriceTravel Trophy recognition, honouring its best business partners in the travel industry, with the aim of promoting high quality standards and making known the long track record of its leaders and promoting the competitiveness in the industry.

“It is an honor to be able to recognize the excellent work of the tourism industry. In PriceTravel Holding we are very pleased and proud to deliver these awards to our friends and business partners, with whom we work hand in hand, day after day to always offer the best to our mutual customers,” said Pablo Castro, Director of Marketing and Supplier Relations at PriceTravel Holding.

It is worth noting that in this edition, PriceTravel evaluated more than 6 thousand hotels, suppliers, and destinations according to their sales generation during 2018. Also recognized were: Orlando as the best destination in North America; Cancun and Riviera Maya, as the best beach destination in Mexico, and Zacatecas as the best city destination in Mexico.

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NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 165

Progress and challenges of Dominican Republic are presented in commemorative luncheon

Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem, President and CEO of DP WORLD, was received by the Vice President of the Dominican Republic, Margarita Cedeño de Fernández, and by the Dominican business community in celebration of the 56th anniversary of the National Council of Private Enterprise (CONEP) and the National Day of Private Enterprise.

The celebration was held during a lunch at the Garden Tent of the El Embajador hotel, an event in which speakers highlighted the efforts of the entrepreneurs, men and women, who contribute to the development of the country.

After giving the salutation, the President of the CONEP, Pedro Brache, underlined the progress and growth achieved by the country as well as the pending challenges in issues such as exports, the signing of the Electricity Compromise Agreement, the need for training initiatives, and jobs for youth, among others.

When taking the podium, a fair-minded César Dargam, Executive Vice President of CONEP, presented the study "Private sector as a growth engine in the Dominican Republic", which was carried out jointly with the firm Analytica.

Then, Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem gave a lecture in which he expressed that this country has a great opportunity with the Dominican Republic due to its excellent resources, its strategic location, infrastructure, and educated workforce, which "we can use as assets to expand investments".

Published on June 7, 2019, by the newspaper HOY (www.hoy.com.do)



NEWS SHEET

EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 166

Mayors of Haiti and Dominican Republic sign municipal cooperation agreement

The Federations of municipalities of Haiti and the Dominican Republic signed an agreement that aims at the collaboration and cooperation between the local governments of the island to promote the development of the two nations.

Nelson Guillén, Mayor of San Cristóbal and signer of the agreement on behalf of the President of the Dominican Federation of Municipalities, Rafael Hidalgo, said that this agreement lays the foundation for them to push in one direction as an island.

He affirmed that the Dominican Republic does not accomplish much by only having modern, developed cities that offer quality services to its population if there is a neighboring country with serious difficulties.

“We want to work together on things that we can achieve, that do not affect the sovereignty of Haiti or the sovereignty of the Dominican Republic, we are working together to improve the condition we are in”, he said.

Guillén reported that in concrete terms, the agreement consists on having Dominican mayors share their experience, the progress they have made in municipal matters, with their Haitian counterparts as is the case of participatory budgeting, a matter in which the Dominican mayors have been very successful.

The agreement has financial support amounting to 130,000 euros that will be provided by the Spain Agency for International Cooperation and will last for six months.

For his part, Wilson Jeudy, Mayor of Delmas, the most important municipality after Port-au-Prince, and signatory of the agreement, said that Haiti and the Dominican Republic are two sister countries that share the same island and that unity is necessary to collaborate mutually.

He indicated that it is their responsibility to run a good municipal government on both sides of the island and this is a framework agreement that allows working in collaboration that can change the relations between the local governments of the island.

“If the case might be true in which the governments of both countries have not been able to understand each other, we as mayors have been able to establish this agreement and study it”, said Jeudy in French and translated for *Diario Libre* by Manuel Alba, General Coordinator of Spain Cooperation in Haiti,.

The Mayor of Carrefour, Jude Edoard Pierre, signed the agreement on behalf of the National Federation of Mayors of Haiti. Also attending were the Secretary General of the Dominican Municipal League (LMD), Johnny Jones, as well as the Minister of Economy, Planning and Development, Isidoro Santana, and the Ambassador of Spain to the Dominican Republic, Alejandro Abellán García de Diego, as witnesses.

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NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 167

Mango exports from the Dominican Republic will reach USD 40 million during 2019

The Minister of Agriculture of the Dominican Republic, Osmar Benítez, said that mango exports from the country could reach USD 40 million this year.

According to “El Nuevo Diario”, this figure will be double what was registered in 2018.

Benítez indicated that mango shipments increased by 138.8%, from 1,412 tons shipped last year to 3,272 tons during the first quarter of 2019.

“The Dominican Mango is going to position itself as the best in the world”, said the head of Agriculture, who also highlighted the advances in Good Agricultural Practices and on the control of the fruit fly.

He also said that the Government's goal is to increase mango shipments to different international markets, asserting that “we are currently exporting more than 14 thousand quintals of fruit to several markets; and with the start-up of the plant and the packer facility this figure may double”.

This will also allow the opening of other markets, such as the United States, Russia, China, and Japan; it is estimated that more than four million boxes could be exported to the US market alone.

Concerning the control of the fruit fly, the government official explained that they are investing in a program to reduce the incidence of the plague. For this purpose, 1,919 traps have been installed in the five main growing areas.

According to Benítez, mango exports generated more than USD 16 million in the Dominican economy during the past year; and it is expected to double those figures before 2020.

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NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 168

IMF highlights 7% growth of the Dominican Republic

The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) concluded the Article IV consultation with the Dominican Republic highlighting the economic growth of 7% in 2018, with a positive momentum that remains in the first part of 2019.

The return to above potential growth in 2018 reflected a strong private investment and consumption response to a timely monetary impulse after the slowdown in 2017, favorable external conditions, and a continued strengthening of the labor market, the IMF assured through a statement.

The executives highlighted the solid economic performance of recent years, which has been supported by the policies of the authorities and consequently have produced a substantial reduction in poverty and inequality.

The report added that “The acceleration in activity has not put pressures on either internal or external balances: inflation remained subdued and the external position strong. This allowed monetary and fiscal policies to switch to neutral-to-tightening gear in 2018, guiding activity towards potential levels”.

According to the IMF, the outlook is favorable and the risks to growth are moderate and balanced. Growth is expected to moderate around 5.5% in 2019 and 5% over the medium-term.

The moderation will be driven by a slowdown in credit expansion, a less supportive external environment, and higher oil prices. Inflation is expected to rise gradually to the central bank’s target range of 4±1 percent with the pickup in food and oil prices.

The directors acknowledged the efforts made by the authorities for such economic performance in the country, reflected by dynamic growth, low inflation, a stable external position, and improved social outcomes.

The outlook remains positive, although it is subject to risks, the authorities must further increase the resilience of the economy to possible shocks, building fiscal and reserves buffers, while, at the same time, addressing structural bottlenecks.

The IMF welcomed the authorities’ commitment to improve the fiscal position, including though reforms in the tax administration to reduce evasion, mobilize revenues, and improve governance.

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NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 169

Dominican writer wins the most important award for children's literature in Great Britain

The writer of Dominican descent Elizabeth Acevedo won the Carnegie Medal, the most important prize awarded for children's literature in Great Britain.

Acevedo, who received the award on Tuesday afternoon, was recognized for her first novel "The Poet X", at the British Library, where the awards ceremony was held.

The author expressed that she was very excited because she is the first person of color to win the award as well as the first Dominican to win the medal that has been awarded to writers such as C.S Lewis of the Chronicles of Narnia.

Elizabeth was nominated along with with Kate Saunders (The Land of Neverendings); Frances Hardinge (A Skinful of Shadows); Jason Reynolds (Long Way Down); Sally Nicholls (Things to Bright Girl Can Do); Candy Gourlay (Bone Talk), and Sophie Anderson (The House with Chicken Legs).

The Carnegie Medal is awarded each year to the best children's book, and its winners are awarded with a gold medal, the Colin Mears prize valued at £5,000 and £500 to donate in books to a public library or educational center of their choice.

This year, Acevedo's first book received the Pura Belpré Award; also the Michael L. Printz Award that recognizes excellence in young adult literature, and the audio book "The Poet X" won the Odyssey Award as the best produced for children and young adults.

A few months ago she published her second book "With the fire on high", which has been in the first places on the New York Times bestseller list.

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NEWS SHEET

EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 170

ERC creates 1,650 jobs in the Dominican Republic with its call centers

In the Dominican Republic, call centers have established themselves as a source of employment, especially for young people seeking access to the labor market. These companies in the country generate about 20,269 direct jobs with a weekly average salary of DOP \$5,432.88 for operators and DOP \$11,665.93 for technical level jobs, according to the National Council of Free Zones (CNZF).

ERC, a global BPO provider with presence in several countries and operating in the Dominican Republic since 2010, decided to establish itself in the country due to its talent focus, its cultural affinity with the United States and countries of the region, the strategic location, and the level of development of the telecommunications industry, according to the company's Executive Vice President, José Nelton González.

The company, which offers telecommunications, financial, insurance, education, and telephone services to its national and international clients, highlights that it makes important contributions to the Dominican economy through the more than 1,650 jobs it currently has in the company.

“Call centers play an important role for the economic and social development of the country. We generate more than 20,000 jobs and there are more than 72 companies established under the free zone system, which contribute more than DOP \$1,400 million in taxes and generate an investment of more than US \$300 million. In addition, here, a person who enters the company with a basic level of Spanish earns DOP \$25,000 minimum, and more than 40% of our employees earn more than their father”, he stated.

González, who has been working for ERC for more than 6 years, said that in addition to the base salary, the company includes transportation, food subsidies, bonuses for entry, performance or sales, private medical insurance, day care centers, and other incentives.

He explained that the new center located in the Industrial Free Zone of San Isidro has 250 employees, but has the goal of hiring about 1,000 more for two different shifts, a figure that, he said, may increase if customers from other countries demand a night shift.

“That, in addition to the 1,400 employees we currently have in the main facility located on Avenida Tiradentes, amounts to a total of 2,400 jobs in this country, with an investment of more than US \$6 million in this plant”, he said.

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NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

No. 171

BCRD is awarded as the best in corporate governance in Central America and the Caribbean

SANTO DOMINGO.- The Central Bank of the Dominican Republic (BCRD) was recognized by the international publication Capital Finance International (CFI) as the Central Bank with the best corporate governance in Central America and the Caribbean during 2018.

This, according to a statement from the entity, was due to the independent execution of its macroeconomic policy, which has been key to the growth registered in the country in recent years, with an average of 6.3% from 2013 to 2018, indicated the organization.

“I receive the award with pride on behalf of the Monetary Board, as the governing body of the BCRD, at a time when our country is considered by the IMF and the World Bank as a top investment destination in the region, given the strength of our economy and its growth, which should make all Dominicans proud”, said Héctor Valdez Albizu, Governor of the BCRD.

The evaluation panel praised the organizational framework of efficiency, ethics, and transparency of the BCRD, “which has contributed to the institution's success and to the best existing governance within Central America and the Caribbean in 2018”.

It also highlights that the jury evaluating the global awards established by CFI praised that since 2012 the BCRD operates under an inflation target plan that “has allowed reducing the level and volatility of inflation in the Dominican Republic, helping to anchor the expectations of the economic players around the inflation objective, thus resulting in a greater credibility of the monetary policy”.

Regarding the human resources of the BCRD, the CFI jury praised it as “very positive” and considered it as its greatest asset, recognizing as fundamental factors the personnel training programs and the financing tools available for its postgraduates.

“The BCRD team stands out for its academic qualifications, with 450 graduate, master's, and PhD employees among its personnel”, said the statement issued by the CFI jury.

About Capital Finance International

Headquartered in London, Capital Finance International is a prestigious print publication and global news channel with internet multichannel editions, followed by specialists from around the world within the areas of business, economics, and finance to guide their evaluations and investments, according to the best information resources and existing analytics.

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