

## **Five Compelling Reasons to Do Business in The Caribbean Region**

According to export.gov the Caribbean region represents the third largest market in Latin America for U.S. Exports. This is due in part to its close proximity to the U.S. and the trade agreements, which helps to facilitate ease to importing and exporting products to these countries. In 1983 the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) was launched and renewed 2000 through legislation enacted by the U.S. Congress. The aim was to provide several tariff and trade benefits to many Central and Caribbean countries.

Recently, Jamaica was named as the number one place for doing business in the Caribbean based on World Bank Group Research.

Here are five compelling reasons for doing business in the Caribbean.

### ***Close Proximity***

- Caribbean Region is a natural commercial partner of the United States, tied closely together by geography, history and culture.

### ***Third Largest Market in Latin America for U.S. Exports***

- Caribbean Region as a whole represents a market of about 23.5 million people who collectively imported over \$18.5 billion of U.S. goods in 2007! As a result, the Region is the 3rd largest export market for U.S. manufactured goods in Latin America behind only Mexico and Brazil.

### ***Cooperative Trade Relationship***

Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) launched in 1983 and renewed

- 2000 through legislation enacted by Congress. U.S. exports to the CBI countries have more than tripled since the CBI's creation, from \$6.5 billion in 1984 to over \$25 billion in 2000.

### ***Free Trade***

- August 5, 2004 the United States and the Dominican Republic signed a Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR). The agreement was implemented on March 1, 2007 ensuring that more than 80% of U.S. manufactured goods enter duty free to the DR. In addition to tariff reduction, CAFTA-DR also provides unprecedented access to government procurement, liberalizes the services sectors, protects U.S. investments, and strengthens protections for U.S. patents, trademarks, and trade secrets in the DR.

### ***Regional Integration***

- Caribbean Community ([CARICOM](#)) is an organization of Caribbean nations and dependencies working to promote economic integration and cooperation among its members. The CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSM) treaty signed on January 1, 2006 by 12 member countries, establishes deeper regional integration through harmonized tariffs and duty free trade. Currently, the CARICOM CSM member countries and the Dominican Republic are scheduled to sign an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) in July 2008 establishing free trade between the DR and the CSM member countries.

<http://www.export.gov/caribbean/doingbusinessinthecaribbeanregion/index.asp>