



# Association of Caribbean Mediaworkers

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## GREEN LIGHT FOR BACCHUS' WORK PERMIT

Georgetown, Guyana, Feb 19 (ACM) - St Kitts and Nevis Prime Minister Dr Denzil Douglas has said the green light has been given for the granting of a work permit to ACM General-Secretary, Clive Bacchus.

The Prime Minister gave the assurance following ceremonies to mark the opening of the new CARICOM Secretariat building in Georgetown, Guyana Saturday. Regional journalists attending the function had worn red ribbons as a mark of protest against delays in granting Bacchus a work permit, continued conflict involving journalists in other Caribbean countries and action seen as being in contravention of St Kitts and Nevis' CARICOM commitments.

The red-ribbon protest was announced Friday by ACM President, Wesley Gibbings, during a discussion on threats to the media in the Caribbean. ACM Vice-Presidents Peter Richards and Bert Wilkinson, together with Bacchus and a number of other ACM members, were in Guyana attending a media conference sponsored by the Commonwealth Journalists Association (CJA) in collaboration with the ACM and the Guyana Press Association (GPA).

The ACM has been waging a campaign to ensure the Guyana-born journalist was not eventually expelled from St Kitts where he has functioned as both a print and broadcast journalist since 1998. The organisation had written Guyana's Foreign Affairs Minister Rudy Insanally calling on the Government of Guyana to investigate the situation.

The Minister had reportedly made efforts to gather more information on the matter, but the recent flooding crisis in Guyana put paid to further efforts, the ACM understands. Gibbings had also Friday expressed concern about violent attacks on journalists in Haiti, the forcible closure of CNS Channel 6 TV in Guyana and continued action in some CARICOM Member States to undermine agreement on the free movement of media workers.

"It is only a matter of time," Dr Douglas told journalists, with reference to the granting of Bacchus' work permit.

He went further to state that the next move would be to put regulations in place to ensure that media workers and other approved categories of skilled CARICOM nationals are granted the right to live and work in St Kitts and Nevis without a work permit.

Gibbings described Dr Douglas' statement as "good news" but added it was important to ensure the government of St Kitts and Nevis follow through with action in keeping with Douglas' verbal commitment.