



CARICOM SG says licensing of journalists not on the agenda

October 26 - The Secretary-General of CARICOM, Edwin Carrington, has denied that the issue of licensing Caribbean journalists has ever been raised at any meeting of any official organ of the Caribbean Community.

He said he knew nothing about such a proposal and that any suggestion that the licensing of journalists was envisaged by the Secretariat "is not true."

A statement on the issue was made by Timothy Odle of the Caricom Secretariat at a workshop in St Lucia on October 13 at which the heads of several media organisations and institutions were present, including the ACM, CBU and CARIMAC. Media representatives from about 10 Caricom Member States were also present.

Mr Carrington has given the assurance that such a measure has never been contemplated by either the Community or the Secretariat.

He said any proposal to set standards and to better facilitate the free movement of media workers in the region had to be generated by the media themselves.

ACM President, Wesley Gibbings said: "I am relieved to hear this from the Caricom Secretary-General. Hopefully, this means the end of any such soundings from the regional secretariat and that it is never contemplated by any Caricom Member State in the future."

"I am heartened by the responses of colleagues throughout the region on this issue. There appears to be virtual unanimity that the registering and licensing of journalists is unacceptable to the media fraternity and inimical to a social environment that fosters free expression," Gibbings said.