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## **Antigua and Barbuda hosts the BIE Capacity Building Programme for the Caribbean region**

St. Johns, 30 October 2024 – From 4 to 6 November 2024, Antigua and Barbuda will proudly host a multilateral session of the Capacity Building Programme of the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE), the Intergovernmental organisation responsible for overseeing International Exhibitions including World Expos. This session will be the first ever organised in the Caribbean region.

This three-day training session in St John's will bring together representatives from across the Caribbean region, highlighting the importance of collaboration and knowledge sharing in enhancing participation in Expos.

The workshop aims to support and learn from Caribbean nations in showcasing their cultures and innovations at upcoming Expos, notably at the next World Expo, Expo 2025 Osaka Kansai, which opens its gates in less than six months, on 13 April 2025.

Participants will take part in thematic sessions led by the BIE, centred around the process of participating in Expos, the advantages of participation and the operational aspects of organising an Expo pavilion. Representatives of upcoming Expos, including World Expo 2025 Osaka Kansai, Specialised Expo 2027 Belgrade, and World Expo 2030 Riyadh, will also lead dedicated sessions. This will offer participants valuable insights into the technical specifications and opportunities provided by these international events, in which participating countries craft immersive visitor experiences based on themes of global importance.

The Capacity Building Programme is a BIE initiative aimed at supporting its 184 Member States and notably providing countries with additional knowledge and specific technical know-how regarding participation in Expos. The aim of this programme is to support Member States' engagement in Expos and the workings of the BIE, therefore fostering the best possible conditions for Expos to serve as attractive and effective platforms for multilateral cooperation, public diplomacy and the education of the public.

This upcoming session in Antigua and Barbuda is the second multilateral Capacity Building Programme organised in partnership with the BIE. Earlier this year, in February 2024, the programme held its first multilateral session in Gabon, following its initial launch in 2020, which was held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Secretary General of the BIE, Dimitri S. Kerkentzes, stated: "The Capacity Building Programme aims to give all BIE Member States the tools and expertise to craft memorable and impactful Expo participations. We are delighted that Antigua and Barbuda will host this training session to share ideas and work together to maximise the impact and outreach of the multifaceted participation of Caribbean countries in Expos."

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Honourable E.P Chet Greene, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Barbuda Affairs, also asserted: “The Government of Antigua and Barbuda places great importance on regional cooperation and seizing the opportunity provided by Expos to engage in international public diplomacy. Hosting the BIE’s Capacity Building Programme is a unique opportunity to strengthen our commitment to international dialogue and exchange in favour of progress for all.”

Antigua and Barbuda participated for the first time in an International Exhibition at Specialised Expo 1986 in Vancouver. The country joined the BIE in 1997 and has regularly participated in World and Specialised Expos since then.

The next World Expo, Expo 2025 in Osaka Kansai, is being held between 13 April and 13 October 2025 under the theme “Designing Future Society for Our Lives”. The next Specialised Expo, Expo 2027 Belgrade, will occur between 15 May and 15 August 2027 in Belgrade, Serbia, under the theme “Play for Humanity – Sport and Music for All”. World Expo 2030 will take place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from 1 October 2030 to 31 March 2031 under the theme “The Era of Change: Together for a Foresighted Tomorrow”.

## **About the BIE**

The Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) is the intergovernmental organisation created in 1928 to lead, promote and foster international exhibitions (Expos). Gathering nations from around the world, Expos are global events that explore a chosen theme through engaging and immersive discoveries, demonstrating progress achieved and prospects for the future. The BIE, which has 184 Member States, oversees four types of Expos: World Expos, Specialised Expos, Horticultural Expos, and the International Exhibition of Triennale Milano.