

Trinidad & Tobago Express

OAS and BDC for environmental study

By ROXANNE STAPLETON

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THE BUSINESS Development Company (BDC) and the Organisation of American States (OAS) yesterday signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to conduct an environmental impact assessment study of trade liberalisation in Trinidad and Tobago.

Signing on behalf of the BDC was its president, Earle Baccus, while Dr Joseph Campbell, director of the OAS signed on its behalf.

Baccus said: "On this occasion the OAS is entrusting to the BDC the sum of just over TT\$85,000 to conduct a study on the impact on the environment by companies in two major sectors of our economy which are opting to take advantage of the opportunities afforded them by various trade agreements."

He added: "If we are to ensure that we preserve the environment for our children and our children's children, we are to make sure that there is the legal institutional arrangement to enforce whatever recommendations may come out of the study.

"So that the issue of the legal accommodation in the current legislation needs to be lobbying the government to ensure that we have the legal infrastructure to ensure that the recommendations are effected and effective," he said.

The report which is due at the end of June 2005 should zero in on aspects such as poor water quality, land degradation, also touching social issues such as employment and gender.

Baccus stressed that many of the environmental issues are still mysteries to many local entrepreneurs in the non-oil sector, where terms like domestically prohibited goods, biodiversity and eco-labeling may never have been heard of.

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