

Embassies of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras and Dominican Republic

The regional newsflash is a publication composed by the Embassies of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Dominican Republic. The newsflash provides an update in terms of imperative economical developments, the most important tenders and a selection of other relevant business news that have to do with the region. This newsflash is shared with a distinctive group of Dutch businesses with special interests in the region or in a specific country. It consists of publicly available information from various sources such as news articles, press releases, and third party information. The Embassies of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in San José, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Dominican Republic are not responsible for the accuracy of the published information. If you do not want to receive the regional newsflash, or wish to add a person to the distribution list, or would like to send a response, please feel free to send an email to sanjose@trade-minbuza.nl. For Panama a separate newsletter is published.

Spreekdagen Latijns-Amerika, 28 t/m 30 juni 2010

Verken uw kansen in Argentinië, Brazilië, Chili, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Suriname en Uruguay. De spreekdagen geven u een unieke gelegenheid om samen met vertegenwoordigers van diplomatieke posten uit verschillende landen te kijken naar uw kansen op de lokale markt.

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Netwerkbijeenkomst Latijns-Amerika, 1 juli 2010

Bent u actief op het gebied van voedingsmiddelenindustrie, duurzame energie of watertechnologie? Latijns-Amerika biedt goede kansen voor Nederlandse ondernemers in deze branches. De landen in dit continent hebben zich al snel hersteld na de economische crisis. Vrijwel alle landen tonen economische groei. Tijdens de netwerkbijeenkomst op donderdagmiddag 1 juli in het Van der Valk Hotel Den Haag Nootdorp kunt u deelnemen aan een van de drie parallele workshops. Daarnaast zijn de vertegenwoordigers van de diplomatieke posten in het buitenland aanwezig.

Inlichtingen bij Annita Jainandan

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Central American region



Negotiations between EU and CA continue (Source: laprensagrafica.com) Even after long sessions, the European Union and Central America have been unable to close the commercial chapter of their Association Agreement. Central American countries are still

demanding larger access quotas for products deemed 'sensitive' (sugar, products with high sugar concentration, meat and rice) and better tariffs for tropical fruits such as banana. Before the start of the round, businessmen of the region warned against rushing the agreement, arguing that this could lead to a deal favoring the EU over Central America, thus wasting a unique chance of helping the weakened Central American economies.

EU Agreement Protects Tomato, Potato and Onion. Other projects such as candy, pastas and sausages were also left out of the agreement. On the plus side, smashed banana, orange and pineapple juice, tuna and palm hearth, among others, are products that will be able to enter the EU with zero tariffs. Mario Montero, executive director of the Food Industry Chamber, explained that the general situation is positive. He regretted, however, the inclusion of products that will lead to unequal competition, as raw materials will still be protected.



SIECA unveils online Central American tariff tool (Source: Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration) The system provides useful tariff information for importing goods and services in Central America. The system provides useful tariff information for importing goods and services in Central America. Dubbed AIC ("Arancel Informatizado Centroamericano"), this tool lets users find out which tariffs must be paid and what other requisites are required to import goods in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. It provides detailed information on which tariffs must be paid when introducing goods to Central American countries, including trade agreement products. It was developed by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), in alliance with CENPROMYPE, the Regional Center for the Promotion of Micro and Small Enterprises in Central America.

SMEs 'Practical Guide to Export to the EU' (Source: Central American Integration System) The guide is intended for Central American Small and Medium Enterprises interested in knowing how to export to the European Union. It includes step-by-step information on export strategies, financial and legislative considerations, customs procedures, storage and transportation specifications and tariffs and taxes. It will available online at www.sica.int/cenpromype.

Containerized port throughputs 2009 ranking (Source: Economic Commission for Latin American and Caribbean) Panama's Colón and Balboa are first in Central America (2 and 3 in Latin America), followed by Limón in Costa Rica (13), Cortés in Honduras (22), Santo Tomás (29), Puerto Barrios (31) and Quetzal (36) in Guatemala. The economic crisis in the region last year reduced port activity in Latin America and the Caribbean, according to a recent ranking prepared by ECLAC. The ranking Containerized Port Throughputs 2009 - Latin American and Caribbean Countries, prepared by ECLAC's Unit of Infrastructure Services, reveals that container movements in 20 of the region's main ports as a whole fell 6.8% from 2008-2009. In some cases, this reduction was over 30%. However, this did not alter ranking positions significantly with regard to 2008. Although still leading in the ranking with 2.25 million TEUs (Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit) in 2009, the port of Santos, in Brazil, nonetheless experienced a 15.7% drop in activity. Santos is followed closely by the port complex Colón and Balboa in Panama, with 2.21 and 2 million TEUs, respectively. Activity in both of these ports also fell with regard to the previous year.

U.S. increases sugar quota (Source: laprensagrafica.com) In Central America, Guatemala gained an additional 4.162 tons, followed by Panama (2.515), El Salvador (2.255), Nicaragua (1.821), Costa Rica (1.301) and Honduras (867). The Office of the United States Trade Representative increased the sugar import quota in 81.946 metric tons. Elsewhere, the largest beneficiary was Dominican Republic, which was allocated an additional 15.262 tons, even more than what the Trade Representative granted to Brazil.

Paid TV and Broadband Market (Source: TeleSemana.COM) In 2015 Central America will sell \$2 billion in paid television and broadband services, both wireless and cable. A report from consulting company Signals Telecom foresees a battle in broadband services, as the average speeds offered in Central America are below South American and Caribbean averages. They also expect competition to cause improvements in 3G coverage, and the introduction of more added value services. Recent developments in this area are the start of operations of Russian company Yota in Nicaragua and the fact that in Costa Rica, after the liberalization of the telecom market, former monopoly ICE took too long to offer paid TV, and this could cause more clients to switch to one of the new upcoming players.

Central America gets \$40 million for renewable energy (Source: latribuna.hn) They will be given in 'environmental' loans to Central American small and medium enterprises. These resources, loaned by the German Development Bank (KfW), will be administered by the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI). The bank stated that this program, called 'Environmental Credit Program for Small and Medium Enterprises', will foster investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy generation and environmentally friendly technologies. Coming September 2-10 a Dutch trade mission on renewable energy and energy efficiency is scheduled to Panama, Costa Rica and Colombia. For more information contact: Ir. A.T. (Bert) Keesman by e-mail: keesman@metasus.nl or via www.metasus.nl

18 new supermarkets in Costa Rica during 2010 (Source: Nacion.com) Automercado, Walmart and Gessa are expected to open 18 new supermarkets in 2010, worth a combined investment of \$20 million. Walmart will add ten new locations to its network, using its Pali and Maxi Bodega Brands, while Automercado will open two and Gessa six under its Perimercados and Super Compro brands. Once ready, Costa Rica will have a grand total of 323 supermarkets, out of which 170 will be owned by Walmart, 82 by Megasuper, 58 by Gessa and 13 by Automercado.

Regional strategy to fight crime (Source: laprensagrafica.com) A joint \$953 million plan to fight crime developed by Central America and Mexico, will be presented to the United States on May. According to the Central American Integration Secretary (SICA), Mexico and Central America require \$803 million to fight crime, \$120 million for prevention and rehabilitation and \$30 million to strengthen institutions. The war against drug trafficking requires the most resources (\$200 million), followed by organized crime (\$130 million), police topics (\$90 million), gangs (\$60 million), murders (\$60 million), illegal traffic of weapons (\$48 million), and corruption (\$60 million).

\$16 million to reforest Central America (Source: elperiodico.com.gt) GTZ, a German technical cooperation agency, will invest this amount over the next 6 years to rescue the region's forests. This program is dubbed "Redd" (Reduction of Emissions and Forest Degradation) and will be implemented in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, Panama and the Dominican Republic. The first phase of the project began on March 2010 and will last until September 2013. Bernhard Dohle, GTZ director for Guatemala, explained the program also seeks to implement new policies and improve others already in place, such as financial incentives for protecting forests.



Costa Rica currency surge 'Worrisome,' (Source: Bloomberg.com) Luis Liberman, Costa Rican Vice President, said the rally in the nation's currency is "worrisome". Costa Rica's colon has surged 11 percent against the dollar since Dec. 31. The currency is benefiting from the so-called carry trade, in which investors borrow in nations with low interest rates to

buy higher-yielding assets, Liberman said. Costa Rica's benchmark rate is 5.75 percent, higher than near zero rates in the U.S., 1 percent in the euro-zone and 0.1 percent in Japan. Liberman, the former head of Bank of Nova Scotia in Costa Rica, said that "the central bank should intervene so volatility isn't so high."

CINDE stated that the increase in the value of the Costa Rican colon versus the U.S. dollar is negatively affecting the country's exporters and diverting foreign direct investment. Alberto Trejos, president of the Costa Rican Investment Promotion Agency (CINDE), stated that the recent strong increase in the price of the Costa Rican currency is making exporters less competitive. He added that the exchange rate is more volatile due to the current "currency bands" system. This has a negative impact on foreign direct investment, diverting it to other destinations, he said. "Trejos believes that the colon should lose some of its value, for exporters to regain competitiveness and attract more foreign investment.

Limon and Moin Ports go out to Tender on May (Source: bnamericas.com) On May authorities will unveil the bidding rules for handling these two Costa Rican ports to private operators. This was announced by Israel Oconotrillo, spokesperson for Japdeva (ports administrator on the Atlantic coast). The start of this process required a signed agreement between the union of Japdeva workers and Japdeva itself, authorizing the port to be transferred to private operators by paying current employees \$137 million in indemnification. Such agreement was finally signed on Tuesday, April 27. 80% of all cargo bound to Costa Rica passes through these two ports. Between August 2008 and August 2009 they recorded losses for half a million dollars, while imports dropped 21% and exports 30%.

New energy loans for SMEs (Source: Leticia Vindas) Bank BAC will offer funding for Small and Medium Enterprises interested in developing energy efficiency projects. The banking institution signed a collaboration agreement with the Inter-American Investment Corporation (IIC). Under it, they will offer funding and technical assistance to small and medium enterprises to develop energy efficiency projects. IIC will also consider additional credit lines for BAC dependencies in the region, for them to also loan to SMEs with energy efficiency projects. **Coming September 2-10 a Dutch trade mission on renewable energy and energy efficiency is scheduled to Panama, Costa Rica and Colombia. For more information contact: Ir. A.T. (Bert) Keesman by e-mail: keesman@metasus.nl or via www.metasus.nl**

Walmart invests \$4.5 million in environmental programs (Source: elfinancierocr.com) The retail multinational will execute a regional program called "Planeta Vida" ("Planet Life"). It includes converting illumination systems at its 350 parking lots across Central America. The project will be completed in 2012, and could reduce the company's energy consumption in 50%. In Costa Rica, the company invested \$1 million in this initiative.

New comprehensive waste management regulation (Source: Cámara de Industrias de Costa Rica) In its initial discussion, the Costa Rican Congress passed the Bill for Comprehensive Waste Management, an important achievement towards real sustainable economic development. In a press release, the Chamber of Industries of Costa Rica celebrated this initiative. They argue that solid waste management has long been a problematic issue in Costa Rica, one that may only be solved via coordinated actions with all the sectors of the population, from the consumer to the government. The law provides clear definitions of waste producers, sellers, importers and consumers, as well as the responsibilities of municipalities and central government.



Sugar shortage during march (Source: Prensa Libre) Guatemalan consumers are coping, not only in places near the border with Mexico but also in the capital, with a restriction to buy sugar in stores and supermarkets. The reason for this is the illegal exportation of the product to Mexico due to a 50% higher price of sugar in the neighbouring country. Consequently, little stores are selling at very high prices and people can only buy sugar if at the same time they buy other products as well. Armando Boesche, manager of ASAZGUA (*Asociación de Azucareros de Guatemala*) explained that the sugar factories will buy back the sugar that was meant for export, to supply sugar for the national market. However, this will raise temporarily the price of sugar with Q 1 in border provinces and Q 0.75 in the rest of the country. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Economic Affairs is taking measures to combat smuggling of sugar and speculation and to guarantee enough sugar supply in the country. Near the end of the month, the measures taken to raise temporarily the price of sugar and offer Mexico legal sale of sugar, had worked and the provision of sugar was normal again.

Guatemalan president Alvaro Colom visits Russia (Source: Prensa Libre) The president of Guatemala, Alvaro Colom, concluded his visit to Russia successfully. During this visit, Dimitri Medvédev, Colom's colleague, expressed Russia's interest in sending various missions to Guatemala to seek investment opportunities. They are especially interested in commerce, tourism and energy, in particular hydro-electric power and oil. Colom declared that the first mission will probably come in July and that the bilateral economic cooperation areas that have the best prospect are oil and hydro-electric power. Colom and Medvédev also agreed on continuing negotiations to sign agreements regarding Promotion and Protection of Investments, extradition, reciprocal penal assistance, technical military cooperation and commercial and economic support. Another result is the elimination of a visa requirement between both countries.

Exportation of Guatemalan agricultural products to Russia (Source: El Periódico) Guatemalan farmers are searching for other countries to export their products besides their main export country, the USA. Countries such as Russia, Italy, Sweden, Denmark and Norway are potential new export destinations for products like fresh vegetables. Products to Russia are being exported through Dutch partner companies. Peas and green beans are already being exported to England, Holland, Germany, France, Belgium and Switzerland. With this extension of export countries, the Guatemalan farmers expect to increase their exportations by 15 to 20 percent in 2010.

Guatemala is struggling to get out of grey list (Source: Prensa Libre and Diario de Centroamérica) Guatemala has to carry out 12 recommendations and reforms to the Commerce and Tributary Code and the Banks and Financial Groups Law required by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), to be eliminated from a grey list of countries that are considered as fiscal paradises. Therefore, Guatemala is in negotiation with seven countries (France, Canada, Holland, Argentina, San Marino, Korea and Mexico) to sign bilateral agreements regarding exchange of financial and fiscal information to improve transparency. During the second semester of 2011, Guatemala will be evaluated by the OECD to determine if the country is fulfilling the agreements. If Guatemala doesn't succeed in getting out of the grey list it will have consequences for its foreign commerce and programmes of financial co-operation. The case of France, who put Guatemala on its black list in February, is an example of what can happen if Guatemala doesn't improve its transparency.

Nicaragua





Command Medical reinvests in Nicaragua (Managua, NIC, April 13th, 2010) Command Medical, an American medical device manufacturer operating in Nicaragua since 2005, inaugurated its new facility on April 13th in Managua, which required an investment of approximately US\$3 million. The company currently generates 45 jobs and expects to increase that number to 180 by the end of 2011. The company operates as a contract manufacturer for nine of the 15 largest medical device companies

in the world, fabricating fully branded, custom-made products and shipping them to their warehouses for distribution to hospitals, clinics, and doctors' offices all over the world. According to David Slick, President of Command Medical, the goal of this expansion is to boost production, increase jobs and provide long-term growth opportunities for the staff. This type of investment highlights the country as an attractive investment destination for new and innovative industries such as medical devices, therefore contributing to the development of the skills and abilities of the Nicaraguan labor force.



An encounter between Nicaragua and Suriname (Paramaribo, SUR, April 15th, 2010) On Thursday April 15th, Javier Chamorro, Executive Director of PRONicaragua, travelled to Paramaribo, Surinam, with the objective of assisting this country in the development of a national investment attraction system through the creation of an investment promotion agency. Due to the experience

and success PRONicaragua has in this field, a presentation on the investment process was given to the Minister of Industry and Trade and his team, as well as representatives of private business chambers. Subsequently to this meeting, PRONicaragua will continue working with the Government of Surinam and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to offer support during the planning, implementation and start-up process for the investment attraction system in that country. As a follow-up to the visit, PRONicaragua will be receiving a delegation of Suriname in Nicaragua to visit our agency's offices and learn about its performance; a series of bilateral meetings will also be programmed in the South American country.

Nicaragua develops its Renewable Energy sector (Source: TheBioenergySite News Desk) The Ministry of Energy and Mines (MEM) in Nicaragua recently granted Blue Power & Energy, S.A. an energy generation license for a period of 30 years to build and operate a 39.6 MW wind farm in the country. The wind farm will have 22 turbines with a capacity to generate up to 1.8MW. The Nicaraguan authorities said it demonstrates the Government's commitment to promoting renewable energy projects in the country to transform the current oil-based energy generation matrix. Between 2008 and 2009, the MEM has granted energy generation licenses to different wind energy projects including Amayo I, Amayo II and Eolo Nicaragua, for a total installed generation capacity of 100 MW. In addition to the nominal capacity that will be installed by Blue Power & Energy, S.A., there are two other wind energy projects in various stages of study/development that together will represent nearly 120 MW in generation capacity. Previous studies have estimated that Nicaragua has over 4,500MW of potential to produce energy from renewable sources, of which 2,000MW correspond to hydroelectric energy, 1,500 to geothermal, 800 to wind power and 200 to biomass. This potential is of great importance because the demand in the Central American market is expected to continue growing from 7,000MW currently to 14,000MW in the next decade.

This is an interesting sector for Dutch investors.



Spanish Survivor to be filmed in Nicaragua Nicaragua has been chosen as the new location for Spain's version of the reality show Survivor (Supervivientes) Season 11, expected to air in May 2010. The Spanish television network, Telecinco, announced that the destination for this season will no longer be the Cochininos Keys in

Honduras like the previous four seasons; instead, the participants will travel to Nicaragua's South Atlantic Autonomous Region (RAAS, for its acronym in Spanish), specifically to Corn Island and the Pearl Keys. The show will have a positive impact on Nicaragua's tourism sector and its economy by drawing the attention of the European audience. Statistics from the Nicaraguan Tourism Board (INTUR, for its acronym in Spanish) show that Europe is the fastest growing source market when it comes to tourists visiting Nicaragua, with a 23.5 percent increase in 2009 when compared to 2008.

Argentina, Guatemala and Nicaragua show up as top "Undiscovered" sourcing destinations "It's a great place to have call centers," said Andrew Kokes, vice president of Marketing, the Americas at Sitel, and a large operator of outsourced call centers around the world. In Nicaragua, Sitel operates two call centers, with around 1,400 employees, mainly handling account inquiries and product support for wireless operators. One hundred percent of the incoming calls originate in the US and, importantly, about 75% of the staff working at SITEL's two in-country facilities have either lived in the US or were educated there.



\$40 million cargo terminal in El Salvador (Source: elsalvador.com) The Executive Ports Commission (CEPA) announced how much it will invest in building a cargo handling terminal in Comalpa. Located at the International Airport of El Salvador (AIES), the terminal will storage cargo containers handled by Port La Unión once it begins operations. The objective is to make it cheaper for companies to use this port. The project will consume 40 hectares, provide customs services, and will feature special energy generation equipment to power refrigerated containers, explained Milton Lacayao, manager of the terminal. Lopez Suárez, CEPA President, recently announced that in 2011 they will negotiate loans to finance the construction of this terminal.

El Salvador must invest in agriculture (Source: laprensagrafica.com) El Salvador is the Central American country with the lowest level of public investment in agriculture. A study by the World Bank revealed that in the past two years, the Salvadoran State has invested less than 1% of the country's GDP in improving this important industry. The World Bank and representatives of the private sector stated the necessity of investing more in agriculture, as it is a strategic sector which gathers the poorest inhabitants: over 50% of the country's poor live in rural areas.

Outsourcing in El Salvador (Source: nearshoreamericas.com) El Salvador is located close to the United States and Canada and in their same time zone, and offers competitive prices when compared to neighbors Mexico, Panamá or Costa Rica. Such conditions make it an attractive location for outsourcing services, call centers and BPO. Still, El Salvador has much to do to take advantage of these conditions. El Salvador was launched as an outsourcing destination in the 2004-2005 period, when Dell and Sykes started operations in the country. At that time, the jobs generated by the industry went from 1,000 to over 9,000 in 2010, a real testament to the attractiveness of the country as an outsourcing destination. There are currently 38 centers in El Salvador (including two finance-specialized BPOs), out of which 20 are working almost exclusively with offshore clients.



Canada to invest \$700 million in Honduras (Source: Proceso Digital) The Canadian Ambassador stated that his country could invest up to \$700 million in mining and apparel in Honduras. Honduran President Porfirio Lobo held a meeting with Neil Reeder, Canadian Ambassador, who stated his country's intention of expanding its mining activity in Honduras. They discussed the creation of a mining code in which they could establish legal safeguards for foreign investors, plus a transparent and equal law for the sector.

Renewable energy projects paralyzed in Honduras (Source: laprensa.hn) Entrepreneurs developing of renewable energy projects have their investments paralyzed and are now requesting the government to define the 250 MW public purchase process. This public acquisition process started in 2009, and in December the National Electric Energy Company (ENEE) announced the participating companies, but the process has been stalled so far. Businessmen are requesting ENEE to define how and when this is going to conclude, because many of the companies who were awarded contracts are already negotiating financing terms with national and international banks.

Honduras' state energy company (ENEE) is preparing a new public bidding process for renewable energy generation. Currently, the country produces 70% of its energy through thermal generation plants (fuel burning). Only 30% comes from renewable sources. ENEE hopes to reverse these percentages in the short term. ENEE's CEO stated; "The board decided to start a new bidding process for renewable sources and to strongly support environmental protection projects done through public/private alliances".

\$160 million from Germany to Honduras (Source: latribuna.hn) The resources will be used in educational, environmental protection and cultural projects. The announcement was made by Karl-Heinz Rode, German Ambassador in Honduras, who explained that his country will resume aid to Honduras after a bilateral meeting in Tegucigalpa. He also commented that Honduras' trade balance is positive ... mainly because of coffee exports, which have increased in the past years, due to designation of origin.



Construction Guaigui hydroelectric dam President Fernandez has sent loans for US\$118.8 million and RD\$723 million to the Senate for approval. The funds are for the proposed construction of the Guaigui hydroelectric dam. The project is being promoted as a way of providing water and electricity and for controlling flooding in La Vega province.

Government buys radars Armed Forces Minister informed that the government is spending US\$34.5 million to purchase radars. The radars would complement the work of the 8 brand new Super Tucano jets purchased by the government at a cost of more than US\$80 million. The minister said that the operation of the Tucanos has resulted in an abrupt and impressive decline in illicit flights to the DR.

DR leads in cigar sales The quality of Dominican cigars has put the DR in the lead in sales of units, volume and value. The DR leads in hand-made cigars, and competes for machine made with a volume of 550 million units in 2009. 10 medium and large-sized manufacturers in the country, employ 15,000 people. But he estimated that when another 20 small factories are included, and the work preparing the tobacco and in the farms is calculated, some 70,000 people make a living from the crop.

Agreement for Haiti and DR projects The Center for Export and Investment (CEI-RD), the Dominican Agribusiness Board (JAD) and the Chamber of Agriculture and Biological Agribusiness of Haiti (CHAAB) have signed an agreement to develop joint investments. The entities will seek support from the European Union and the United States for the projects, which will involve a US\$55 million investment. They are planning joint ventures to promote farming, tourism, industry and the production of nursery-farmed crops for export, by setting up agribusiness nurseries in Haiti.

US\$750 million in bonds The government of the Dominican Republic sold US\$750 million in 11-year bonds on Thursday 29th of April at 376.8 basis points over Treasury's to yield 7.5%, according to Hacienda Minister. The Minister expressed his satisfaction with the 7.5% interest rate. Since the government was authorized to issue up to US\$1 billion in bonds, it can still place the remaining US\$250 million sometime in the future, probably on the London bond market, according to a local newspaper.

Positive signals on DR economy The IMF, with which the DR has a 28-month Stand-by arrangement, is optimistic that 2010 will be a year of growth for the DR and predicts a growth rate of 3-4% in 2010. Recently Central Bank governor forecast that the Dominican economy could grow by 8% (growth was 7.5% in the first trimester). According to the IMF the 4% predicted growth rate would be surpassed if the country were able to boost its exports and remittances and if travel to the DR picks up pace. Furthermore, the reconstruction work in Haiti would stimulate demand for Dominican goods and services. Moody's Investors Service has raised the Dominican Republic's credit rating by one level. DR government bonds are now at B1, an improvement on the previous B2 rating. Moody's said that the Dominican economy's proven capability to resist outside events, as well as the favourable growth prospects for its economy were the basis for the new ratings. Moody's said that despite being a small-sized economy with strong links to the United States, the DR has shown a higher than expected level of resilience to external shakeups. The fact that it managed to show a positive GDP growth rate last years was thought to show that the DR economy has a greater ability to overcome foreign impacts.

Trade Events

FENITUR 2010, June 18-21, Managua, Nicaragua In order to promote Nicaragua's domestic and international tourism strongly, the president of the Nicaraguan Tourism Board (INTUR for its acronym in Spanish), Mario Salinas, announced the official launch of the country's First International Tourism Fair, FENITUR 2010, taking place in the capital city of Managua, on June 18 to the 21 at the Crowne Plaza Convention Center. The Fair aims to promote Nicaragua as a national and international tourist destination, with the participation of large, medium and small tourism businesses across the country, involving national institutions, municipalities and organizations interested in promoting cooperation and sustainable development of the national tourism industry. The fair will also bring together Nicaraguan and foreign tour operators, especially those of Central America and the United States.



Dutch B2B renewable energy and energy saving matchmaking trade mission to Central America and Colombia

The Dutch Embassy in Costa Rica in cooperation with the

Dutch Embassy in Colombia, have contracted Metasus Consulting from the Netherlands who completed a study about the opportunities for Dutch companies in the sectors of renewable energy and energy saving. Coming September 2-10 a Dutch trade mission on renewable energy and energy efficiency is scheduled to Panama, Costa Rica and Colombia. As a result of preparatory market surveys in 2009, many business opportunities were identified in biomass / biofuels, waste 2 energy, solar and wind energy as well as energy efficiency. Private and public sector organizations can also participate in development cooperation projects or invest in hydropower or biofuels. Financial instruments of a.o. FMO and NL EVD International make it even more attractive to participate. The mission is organized by MetaSus, in collaboration with the Dutch renewable energy umbrella organization DE Koepel and local partners. NL EVD Internationaal, the Dutch Agency for international business and cooperation supports the mission and the Dutch Embassies are actively cooperating to turn the event into a success. For more information contact: Ir. A.T. (Bert) Keesman by e-mail: keesman@metasus.nl or via www.metasus.nl



Dutch B2B matchmaking trade mission to Central America

The EVD has assigned DLV Plant, with the local support of INCAE business school (Ranked #1 in Latin America), the Ministries of Agriculture of Central America, the Dutch Embassies in Central America and SNV to organize a B2B Tomato & Dairy Trade Mission. The mission will also focus on social corporate responsibility and fair trade. The events will take place in Panama and Costa Rica, where representatives and branch organizations from whole Central America will be present. A trade mission will be planned for 14-20 of November. For more details send an e-mail to Jan Tuinstra at j.tuinstra@dlvplant.nl

[More information](#)



TRADEPLATFORM:

In 2009 the Departments of Commerce of the Dutch Embassies Guatemala-City, Managua and San José developed a trade platform. This Business to Business (B2B) tool helps Central American and Dutch companies to get in touch with the aim of exchanging information and doing business. The website www.doingtradeincentralamerica.com provides information sources for Dutch companies interested in doing trade with Central American companies, and groups them together on this website. On the 1st of November 2009 the Embassy of the Netherlands has launched a trade platform, which can be found at www.centralamericab2b.com. This service is provided free of charge. The services of this trade platform include the possibility to promote your company, to publish your trade leads, to search for potential contacts or partners in the different countries and sectors, and to contact the companies that you are interested in. In addition, notifications of events that could be of interest to Dutch or Central American companies will be published on this platform. To maximize the accessibility for all parties, the website is in English. Furthermore, a short manual is provided to make the usage of the website as easy as possible.

To benefit from all these services, please register your company at http://www.centralamericab2b.com/index.php?option=com_comprofiler&task=registers.



EVD country webpage

The EVD provides Central American country web pages where you can find up-to-date information, such as: business news, economical developments, tenders, country information (incl. fact sheet and laws), interesting sectors, activities, important documents and the business country guide from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. For more information visit the website: www.evd.nl/landen. More information can also be obtained from Judith Brussee, e-mail: centraal-amerika@info.evd.nl, telephone: +0031 (070) 778 86 92.



Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands as information source

On the website of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in San José (for the countries Panama, Costa Rica, Honduras and El Salvador) you can not only find general information about these countries in our resort, but also specific commercial information. Our 'handelswijzers' business trade guides entail broad and up-to-date information on how to do business in each of the four countries, they are meant as a tool/guide for Dutch exporters and investors. For more information visit: www.holanda.cr, www.handelswijzer.com, www.doingtradeincentralamerica.com or www.centralamericab2b.com.

For more information you can contact our commercial department at the Dutch Embassy in San José thru email sanjose@trade-minbuza.nl or by phone (00506) 2296 1490 (Carel Richter or Hans Buhrs).

You can also contact our Consulaat-Generaal in Panama (Debby van der Schuit), Phone: (00507) 263 6494 or (00507) 264 7257. Email: consuladonl@cwpanama.net

For more information about Guatemala you can contact the commercial department of the Dutch Embassy in Guatemala City by email; gua-ez@minbuza.nl or by telephone (00502) 2381 4300 (Susana Azurdia). More information can be found on the website: www.mfa.nl/gua

For more information about Nicaragua you can contact the commercial department of the Dutch Embassy in Managua by email mng@minbuza.nl or by telephone (00505) 2276 8630 (Jan Bauer, Luis Bravo) For more information visit the following website: www.embajadaholanda-nic.com .

For more information about the Dominican Republic contact the commercial department of the Dutch Embassy in Santo Domingo by email std-ea@minbuza.nl or by telephone (00 1 809) 262 0320 (Reinier Davina) More information is available on the following website: www.holanda.org.do