



Press Release

July 24, 2017

Commonwealth Secretariat and Central Bank Sign MOU to Improve the Debt Management Framework in The Bahamas

In July 2017, the Central Bank of The Bahamas signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Commonwealth Secretariat for joint funding of technical assistance (TA) to modernise the legal framework for managing Bahamas Government debt. This is the first jointly funded donor-recipient TA arrangement that the Commonwealth Secretariat has sponsored. Through the project, the Secretariat will arrange TA to develop a consolidated draft law for Government Debt Management in The Bahamas. Implementation of the TA is expected to begin in September, 2017.

The TA is part of an ongoing collaboration between the Central Bank, the Ministry of Finance and the Public Treasury, to improve the pricing model for debt issuance, strengthen debt management services provided by the Central Bank, and boost secondary market trading in Government debt. The modernisation strategy will deliver on the dematerialisation of bond certificates, and introduce an electronic securities depository for all issued bonds. The total number of debt tranches outstanding is also slated for consolidation, to better facilitate secondary market activity. Earlier rounds of TA by the Commonwealth Secretariat, provided the roadmap for the current focus on the legal arrangements for debt issuance and investment initiated in 2016 to create the securities depository.

To solidify the cooperation and partnership between The Bahamas and the Commonwealth Secretariat, The Rt. Hon. Patricia Scotland, Commonwealth Secretary-General, paid a courtesy call on the Governor of the Central Bank of The Bahamas, on 19 July 2017. The Secretary-General was in The Bahamas for the VI Commonwealth Youth Games, which took place from 18-23 July 2017. The Governor presented her with a commemorative coin celebrating the gold medal performance of the Bahamas "Golden Girls" in the women's 4 x 100 relay in the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

The Governor and the Secretary General agreed to continue to partner and share lessons learned from Commonwealth counterpart countries on areas of mutual interest, including "fintech", exchange control liberalisation, trade, technology and financial inclusion.

24 July 2017