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**Owen Seymour Arthur:
A Caribbean Intellectual Giant Who Worked Passionately to Create Wealth
and High Standards of Living for the People of Barbados and the Caribbean Region**

A Tribute by the Most Hon. PJ Patterson

With the passing of the Right Honourable Owen Seymour Arthur, the people of Barbados, and indeed the entire Caribbean, have lost a stalwart of regional integration and a relentless advocate of the region within the global halls of power. He loved Jamaica and we therefore feel his loss in a very special way.

Whether as Chairman of the Caribbean Community or as the standing Head of the CSME, he led with impeccable distinction in his own inimitable style. He was convinced of the innate ability of the countries of the region, working together, to create wealth and to achieve and sustain high standards of the living for their citizens.

An economist by training, Owen Arthur believed passionately that the greatest asset of the Caribbean nations are their people. He was a tireless campaigner in the cause of preserving the health and social wellbeing of the Caribbean people while investing in their education and training in order to unlock their full potential for sustainable personal, national and regional development.

It was in Jamaica he learnt that strong economic fundamentals and the astute management of government finances are not objectives in and of themselves, but are prerequisites for continuous investment in human social development. He followed in the tradition of a distinguished list of Caribbean economic scholars who were dedicated and bold enough to apply their knowledge and intellect to the realm of politics and government in order to effect real positive transformation in people's lives and circumstances.

Within the Commonwealth, he contributed immensely to the discourse on Small Island States and led international assignments. Owen was never timid in articulating the social and economic injustices meted out to Caribbean peoples and highlighting the historical obstacles with which our societies have had to contend in our decades-old quest for independence, self-determination, survival and growth. In internal diplomatic exchanges, in the halls of global international financial institutions and in other corridors of power, he was an unrelenting advocate of fair and differential treatment for Caribbean nations as a means of remedying some of those historical imbalances.

I had the privilege to have served alongside Owen Arthur in the shared pursuit of economic development for our respective countries and peoples and in achieving some of the tangible benefits that accrue from cultural exchange, policy coordination, functional cooperation and economic integration under the auspices of our Caribbean Community.

Owen laid solid foundations for sustainable social and economic development in order to achieve the fruits of economic growth and lasting prosperity for the people of Barbados and the Caribbean.

His intimate knowledge of Jamaica was remarkable and he used every opportunity to visit portions of the island to enjoy our cuisine and indulge in domino games as well as stimulating conversations.

I offer sincere condolences to his wife, daughters and other members of his family and to the Government and people of Barbados on the passing of an icon of Caribbean social, economic and political advocacy and a true champion of Caribbean regional integration.

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