

Petrotrin explores Haiti's energy needs

By Juhel Browne

A team of Petrotrin officials will be sent to Haiti to review the nation's energy needs as soon as its new president-elect Rene Preval is inaugurated on Friday.

Foreign Minister Knowlson Gift made the announcement last week as the Caribbean Community (Caricom) is set to welcome Haiti back into its fold in July.

During Thursday's post-Cabinet news conference, Gift noted that T&T had several bilateral agreements with Haiti which include issues surrounding oil and natural gas.

"We have had a team on ground in Haiti last year from Petrotrin," he said.

"That team was from Petrotrin to see the energy needs particularly from the standpoint of terminalling... in terms of the natural gas and petroleum hook-up."

Preval won Haiti's long-awaited democratic presidential election in February.

Caricom had suspended Haiti from its organization after refusing to recognize the US-appointed interim government in Haiti since the controversial departure of its exiled president Jean Bertrand-Aristide in February, 2004.

For the past two years, Caricom maintained that it would only recognize a democratically elected government in Haiti.

During a visit to T&T on January 25, Haiti's then US-appointed interim prime minister, Gerard Latortue, met with officials from the T&T Electricity Commission.

Latortue said Haiti had an electricity shortage, which it must address.

Once it officially rejoins Caricom, Haiti will stand to benefit from its existing trade relations with Caricom member states while their entrepreneurs will be able to access its potentially large consumer market.

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