

Antigua-Barbuda's WTO Ambassador meets with US Congressman to discuss WTO Internet gaming case

Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the WTO, Dr John Ashe, met on Tuesday with Congressman Pete Sessions to discuss the current status of Antigua and Barbuda's WTO Internet gaming dispute with the United States.

„The primary objective of the meeting was to brief the Congressman on the status of our WTO dispute with the United States,“ said Ambassador Ashe.

„And with the April 3 deadline for the US to inform the WTO membership of the steps it has taken to comply with the recommendations of the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body in this dispute, a sense of urgency permeated our discussions,“ he added.

US Congressman Pete Sessions, who is Republican and represents Dallas, Texas, is well known for his pro-business record in the US Congress. He recently received the 2005 Spirit of Enterprise Award from the United States Chamber of Commerce in recognition of his support for a pro-business legislative agenda during the second session of the current (108th) Congress. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce issues the Spirit of Enterprise Award each year based on rankings it gives lawmakers for key business votes.

Congressman Sessions scored 93% for his voting record on the Chamber's 2005 key votes, including votes on class action reform, bankruptcy reform, and free trade, including the U.S.-Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement. The Congressman has received the Spirit of Enterprise Award from

the U.S. Chamber of Commerce each year he has served in Congress.

Ambassador Ashe, who was accompanied by Antigua and Barbuda's legal adviser on the WTO dispute, Mark Mendel, also updated the CARICOM Permanent Representatives to the Organization of American States/Ambassadors to the United States on the meeting with the Congressman and urged them to reinforce Antigua and Barbuda's concerns with the US Administration's response to date to the WTO's ruling, in their individual interaction with the members of the US Congress and the Bush Administration.