



Barbados Employers'
Confederation

Tribute to The Right Honourable Owen S. Arthur

Barbados Employers' Confederation (BEC) joins with our nation as we mourn the loss of a national and regional leader, Professor the Right Honourable Owen S. Arthur.

As our country's longest serving prime minister, Professor Arthur has left an enduring and indelible mark on the economic and social development of Barbados. His economic reforms which cut unemployment from more than 20 percent in 1994 to just over 9 percent in 2000 were supported by the introduction of the Social Partnership, for which Barbados is renowned. Not only did Professor Arthur work to boost the local economy, but he was also dedicated to the deepening of regional and global cooperation.

Within CARICOM Professor Arthur was described as the chief architect of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy; he provided strong support for the establishment of the Caribbean Court of Justice and demonstrated vanguard leadership in advocating for the University of the West Indies to be recognised in the international arena of research and delivery of education. Equally, Professor Arthur promoted efforts for the sustainability of the regional airline LIAT and sought to position it at the leading edge in the movement of people and goods in the Caribbean.

The BEC benefited from and enjoyed its full share of Professor Arthur visionary leadership and unapologetic philosophy, which was centred on "all the people working together to transform Barbados into a fully developed country; a model democracy that is prosperous, productive, peaceful socially just and inclusive; and, a centre for high quality services whose standards of excellence are global and at the same time rooted in the best Barbadian traditions". In his several interactions with our Council, management and membership, we were challenged and guided to embrace social partnership, undertake the leap to modernize our industrial relations landscape and more particularly to work towards unleashing the full potential of our people irrespective of generation, class, race or creed.

To his wife, Julie; his two children, Leah and Sabrina; other family members, and to the people of Barbados, we extend condolences and pray that the memories you shared with him will bring comfort, healing, strength and faith during this time of grief and sorrow.

May Professor Arthur rest in peace and enjoy life eternal.