

# Barbados Advocate

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## 'Increased dialogue was key to talks'

President of the Caribbean Development Bank, William Demas, says the need for increased dialogue was a key focus of a just-ended symposium on ways to improve the Caribbean Basin Initiative.

Demas's comment yesterday came at the end of a two-day consultation between U.S. Congressmen and delegates of various Caribbean organisations and interest groups.

Demas told a news conference: "What evolved from the symposium was the vital need for consultation so that policymakers introducing policies on behalf of the U.S. can get a genuine understanding of the real problems of the Caribbean and make their policy approaches more effective than they have been in the past."

Caribbean delegates proposed establishment of a full-time secretariat responsible for co-ordination and consultation as it related to CBI developments.

St Lucia's Deputy Prime Minister George Mallett and St Vincent and the Grenadines Agriculture Minister Mar-

cus DeFreitas described the symposium, chaired jointly by Congressmen George Crockett and Dan Mica, as a useful experience.

### USEFUL EXPERIENCE

"It has been a wonderful experience. This is a beginning and we can't expect miracles to happen. We expect there'll be some opposition to the Bill now before Congress, but I think the information we have given the mission will be extremely useful in trying to deal with the questions that will arise," Mallett said.

The so-called Gibbons Bill, presently before Congress, seeks to amend and improve the existing CBI legislation.

DeFreitas said: "It has been a very useful experience. As a member of the political directorate it afforded me an opportunity to interact with people and organisations outside of government."

The Congressional mission announced plans to develop legislation reflecting concerns raised at the symposium.



MR. DEMAS