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Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

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BARBADOS TO ISSUE MACHINE READABLE PASSPORTS IN OVERSEAS MISSIONS

The Immigration Department and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will shortly embark on a programme which will see the Government of Barbados extending the issue of the new format Barbados machine readable passports to nationals of Barbados who apply at Barbados' Embassies and Consulates overseas. This will ensure that Barbados complies with the requirement of the International Civil Aviation Authority (ICAO) that all travelers should have a machine readable passport by the deadline of November 2010.

From July 15, 2009 a pilot programme will be undertaken with the Barbados Consulate in New York, the Mission which issues the largest number of Barbados passports overseas. Following the pilot phase, it is expected that the programme will be rolled out at all of Barbados' overseas Missions from October 15, 2009.

The final preparation and printing of machine readable passports will be centralised at the Immigration Department in Bridgetown. Overseas Barbadian nationals should therefore be aware that processing time will be increased to take account of this fact. They should allow up to six weeks for the processing of their new machine readable passports, and should submit their applications to the nearest Consulate or Embassy well in advance of their intended date of travel.

Overseas nationals who are still in possession of a valid old format handwritten passport, and who have plans to travel to Barbados before its expiry date, are encouraged to apply for their new passport while in Barbados. They should do so immediately on arrival to allow the Immigration Department sufficient time to expedite their application.

The new Barbados machine readable passport will be valid for ten years and is not renewable. The fee for the Barbados passport issued overseas will remain the same but a processing charge will be applied to cover the additional

expenses for the transporting of the passports between headquarters and Missions. (END)