

The Bahamas Well Ahead of G20/OECD Standard

Nassau, Bahamas – February 23, 2010: The Bahamas has signed its 11th Tax Information Exchange Agreement (TIEA) and has initialed nine additional agreements well in advance of the G20 March 31, 2010 deadline to meet the internationally agreed tax standard.

TIEA negotiations between The Bahamas and Mexico were concluded with the signing of the agreement today. The Bahamas also expects its 12th TIEA in the coming weeks.

TIEA negotiations also have been successfully concluded with Germany, Canada, Spain, Australia, South Africa, South Korea and the seven Nordic countries. The seven Nordic countries are Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Iceland, Greenland and Faroe Islands. Signature on agreements with these countries will follow the completion of the relevant internal procedures required for the signing of treaty instruments. These internal procedures, which have been fast tracked by some countries, include the added requirement of translating the Agreement into relevant native languages,

The Bahamas previously has signed agreements with the United States of America, Great Britain and Northern Ireland, China, France, New Zealand, Argentina, Belgium, the Netherlands, Monaco and San Marino.

The TIEA with Mexico is the sixth Agreement concluded by The Bahamas with a member of the G-20; and the seventh such arrangement entered into with an OECD member.

The Bahamas has long sought a level playing field on tax information change. The Bahamas, as a sovereign nation, sought in 1999 and again in 2002, to protect its economic interests and fiscal autonomy in all negotiations with the OECD. The Bahamas considered the establishment of a level playing field, where all OECD members and major finance centres agreed to implement the same standards, to be critical to its economic interests. Since then, The Bahamas has been an active participant in the Global Forum and its various sub-committees. .

The Bahamas Financial Services Board (BFSB) believes the decision to endorse and meet the OECD Standard reinforces The Bahamas' unwavering commitment to be a trusted jurisdiction for clients and to be a responsible member of the international community.

"By meeting the OECD standard the Government has demonstrated that it intends to ensure The Bahamas remains a well regulated jurisdiction which meets evolving

standards for offering international financial services,” said BFSB CEO and Executive Director Wendy Warren.

“At the same time clients can be assured that The Bahamas will only exchange information on agreed and transparent protocols. Legislative and administrative regimes in The Bahamas have, and will continue to have, respect for the privacy of our clients and will preserve banking confidentiality.”