

Speeches

Media Urged To Play a Greater Role

June 8th, 2001

Media personnel in the Caribbean have a pivotal role to play in educating the public about the preservation of the environment and of the dangers facing the same. This reminder came yesterday from Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Billie Miller, during the closing ceremony of the Caribbean Broadcasting Union's media symposium on "Marine Resources, Use In Economic Development", at the Grand Barbados Hotel. A prime example of a regional initiative, which Ms. Miller pointed out could benefit immensely from the involvement of the media, was the proposal before the United Nations "to have the Caribbean Sea designated as a special area in the context of sustainable development".

While noting that the Caribbean Sea was "a precious and economically vulnerable natural resource" on which the region depended heavily for its economic livelihood, she said much more must be done "to raise public awareness and to build national and international understanding of and support for this initiative".

She said: "Your first responsibility is to make yourselves fully conversant with the issue in all its complexities. Your next task is to convey that information to the public in a manner which both informs and educates. The media, whether print or electronic, exercise considerable influence in shaping the worldview of its public." Minister Miller is also chairman of the Association of Caribbean States Council of Ministers which is charged with coordinating a regional strategy for the Caribbean Sea. (BGIS)