

Press Tour Reveals Baha Mar Convention Center is World Class and Ready for IDB-ICC Annual Meeting

For The Bahamas Weekly By Azaleta Ishmael-Newry
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Nassau, Bahamas – The Annual Meeting of the Boards of Governors of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Inter-American Investment Corporation (IIC) will be held from April 7 – 10, 2016 at the Baha Mar Convention Center in Nassau, Bahamas. While the Baha Mar hotels are not yet open, many hotels like the Melia, Breezes Super Clubs, Atlantis, the new Marriot property on West Bay Street, Island house and others, are receiving the 2,000 visitors and delegates. Add in local representatives and participants, and the IDB-ICC conference is expected to host more than 3,000 persons. The Melia Hotel and Atlantis are also event sites.

Lindsay Thompson a reporter from Bahamas Information Services, who has played an integral role on the media side, shared her thoughts. “I have covered major conferences in Europe, Canada, the US and the Caribbean. I have never seen a set up so magnificent. We are world-class and I am really proud.”

On April 6th, members of the local media were given a walk through of the newly revamped 200,000 square feet Baha Mar Convention Center by project coordinator for the government and local organizing committee, Janeen McCartney and media consultant Carlton Smith. The local media found the convention center impressively modern, beautifully designed and outfitted with state of the art technology and high-tech session rooms. Bahamian graphic designer, Shavanti Smith who had worked on the IAAF in Nassau, completed the branding for this 57th IDB and 37th IIC conference that leaves an everlasting, positive impression.

“We are ready to go,” said Janeen McCartney. “We have been ready since Easter and we have met the high requirements.” During the walk through with McCartney and Smith, they highlighted various features like the technology, large computer info boards and tablets that also serve as coffee tables and the television screens that are strategically placed in the public areas. Apart from the boardrooms and media room, meetings rooms, executive offices for various countries and information areas are set up throughout. A cultural village with a prominent Junkanoo structure, showcase Bahamian art, photography and sculpture work and there are dining areas available as well as food vendors and artisans.

The plenary room, a closed door session room enhances the architecture of Baha Mar and is breathtakingly beautiful with modular white podium and floor tables and seating that sparkle in its space, against the royal blue carpeted floors and Bahamian flora. Four interpreter booths are at the back of the room for English, French, Spanish and Portuguese translators along with an elaborate broadcasting section.

Approximately 200 Bahamians make up the core working team for the conference however, a Bahamian company, Movi Group led by Burton Wallace has a significant team of their own. As well as providing five feeds from The Bahamas conference to the IDB’s Washington, D.C. office, they are responsible for broadcasting, lighting and sound requirements. Movi Group’s project team consists of 70 persons from Nassau, Freeport and Brazil. Their partnership with Multivideo, one of the largest production companies in Brazil and successful broadcasters for the London 2012 and Rio 2016 Olympics has been seamless. “Multivideo is an important collaboration and owner Servio Mattoso has not only proudly blended his team with mine,” states Wallace, “He has also invested in our country and in training Bahamian professionals.”

Baha Mar staff, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Works and Planning, Bahamian contractors, the IDB and ICC and others have worked tirelessly to showcase Baha Mar’s convention facilities, the tourism product, cultural experience and all else that The Bahamas has to offer. Security at the conference will be tight and are made up of local security, augmented by the Royal Bahamas Police Force and Bahamas Defense Force.

As stated on the IDB website, “This official gathering is a forum for discussion among the institution's Governors, most of whom are Ministers of Finance, Presidents of Central Banks, or other high level authorities of the member countries. Representatives of multilateral financial institutions, development agencies, and private banks will be present and various hotels in New Providence and on Paradise Island have benefitted from this conference.” The Bahamas Government has spent \$6 million preparing to host and IDB has spent \$5 million. More information on the conference can be found at www.iadb.org.

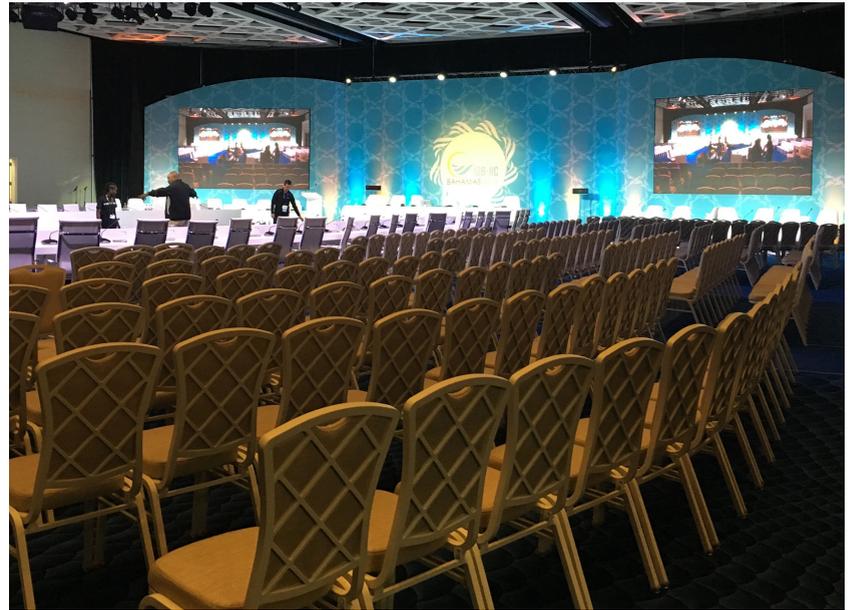
PHOTOS By Azaleta Ishmael-Newry



Media Room for Journalists and Writers



Members of the Bahamian Media tour the IDB facilities at Baha Mar during a press tour that took place on April 6, 2016. Azaleta Ishmael-Newry writer for The Bahamas Weekly try the touch screens that will be available the Conference.



Set up of the conference show in photos above. The exterior of the Baha Mar Convention Centre is also shown

Photos by Azaleta Ishmael-Newry