

Foreign Exchange Summary

as at October 11, 2019

Member State	USD	CAD	GBP	Euro
Bahamas (BSD)	1.00	0.76	1.26	1.10
Barbados (BBD)	2.03	1.53	2.54	2.25
Belize (BZD)	2.02	1.54	2.57	2.24
Guyana (GYD)	210.45	158.03	258.02	232.26
Haiti (HTG)	93.39	70.34	121.68	102.89
Jamaica * (JMD)	136.87	101.39	171.68	152.77
OECS (XCD)	2.71	2.03	3.38	2.97
Suriname (SRD)	7.52	5.65	9.20	8.27
T&T (TTD)	6.80	5.36	8.89	7.85

*Rates applicable for Customs & GCT purposes

Business News In Brief

Antigua wants to invest directly in LIAT.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has declared that Antigua and Barbuda has sourced \$40 million to pump in LIAT and no longer wants to buy Barbados' shares in the sub-regional carrier. The money is to come from a loan facility provided by the Venezuela-based ALBA Bank. "We've taken a decision that instead of buying Barbados' shares that we will invest directly in LIAT." This will however be subject to the approval of LIAT's other shareholders and would likely trigger of new capital call for the airline in the absence of existing shares being made available to Antigua. [\(BT\)](#)

T&T sees improvement in tourism numbers

Trinidad and Tobago's tourism industry is on an upward trajectory. In his contribution to the 2020 Budget debate, Tourism Minister Randall Mitchell said in 2019, the twin-island saw an improvement in visitor arrival figures. He said between January to August, T&T recorded 267,256 stopover arrivals, a 2.5% increase over the same period in 2018. Trinidad recorded 258,000 stopover arrivals, a 1.8% increase while Tobago recorded 15,568 stopover arrivals, an increase of 15.2%. Visitor spend was also up this year by 12.6%. Mitchell said the average visitor spent TT\$9,180.65 for an average stay of 14 days. Carnival visitors spent on average TT\$12,000 per person and a total spend of close to TT\$400 million. [\(LOOP\)](#)

Belize pace of economic recovery slowing—IMF

Belize's economic recovery continues but the pace is slowing. That's the word from the International Monetary Fund at the end of the 2019 Article IV consultation which ended on October 4, 2019. Real GDP grew by 3.2% in 2018 and by an estimated 4% (y/y) in 2019 Q1. The unemployment rate reached a historic low of 7.6% in April 2019, with inflation near zero. Tourist arrivals grew by double digits in 2018. However, recent data indicate a slowdown in economic activity, with growth for 2019 projected at 1½%. The current account deficit widened to 7.9% of GDP in 2018 from 7.7% in 2017, despite higher tourism earnings, reflecting increased imports of construction materials, including for large foreign-financed projects. The government implemented significant fiscal consolidation over the past two years, but the pace of adjustment has slowed. The primary fiscal surplus reached 2.1% of GDP in FY2018/19. The approved FY2019/20 budget targeted a primary fiscal surplus of just above 2% of GDP, but recent data indicate more spending on wages and public investment and weaker revenue than expected, putting the budget's target at risk. [\(IMF\)](#)

Corporate Movements

⇒ Scotia Group Jamaica Limited (SGJ) has appointed Marcette McLeggon, Vice President & Chief Risk Officer, Caribbean North & Central, effective October 14, 2019.

Bahamas guarantees loans to MSMEs

The Bahamas government at the weekend has indicated that it will be guaranteeing loans to micro, small and medium sized (MSME) enterprises affected by Hurricane Dorian. In this regards the State is providing US\$5 million to guarantee up to US\$6.7 million dollars in loans through the Clearing Banks Association and that two million dollars will be given equity in partnerships and US\$1.3 million in micro-loans and grants. According to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, K. Peter Turnquest, the Access Accelerator, Small Business Development Centre (SBDC), through the Ministry and private financial partners, is offering government guaranteed loans. This comes in the wake of a Grand Bahama Chamber of Commerce survey which found that 63% of businesses had no insurance, 45% of those affected by the Hurricane remain closed with some 13% of that number unsure whether they would ever reopen, leading to a 22% decline in employment. [\(Gleaner\)](#) [\(NG\)](#)

Stock Market Summary

as at October 11, 2019

Jamaica Stock Exchange

Overall Market activity resulted from trading in 37 stocks of which 15 advanced, 17 declined and 5 traded firm. Market volume amounted to 11,554,366 units valued at over J\$237,158,382.71. Wigton Windfarm Limited Ordinary Shares was volume leader with 5,240,988 units (45.36%) traded. JSE Index declined by 3,108.66 points (0.61 %) to close at 503,227.91.

Barbados Stock Exchange

1 security traded firm as 4,911 shares traded on the Regular Market, with a total value of BD\$14,487.45. Sagicor Financial Corporation Limited was the sole trader, trading 4,911 shares at \$2.95. Index closed at 3,272.96.

Trinidad & Tobago Stock Exchange

Overall Market activity resulted from trading in 13 securities of which 3 advanced, 5 declined and 5 traded firm. Trading activity on the First Tier Market registered a volume of 51,688 shares crossing the floor of the Exchange valued at TT\$1,619,372.49. Trinidad and Tobago NGL Limited was the volume leader with 21,136 shares changing hands for a value of TT\$538,974.24. The All T&T Index declined by 3.93 points (0.22%) to close at 1,750.55. The Composite Index declined by 2.63 points (0.19%) to close at 1,406.27 and the Cross Listed Index declined by 0.18 points (0.12%) to close at 143.97.

Guyana Stock Exchange

1 stocks advanced, 1 declined and 3 traded firm as 88,068 units traded on the Regular Market. Republic Bank Limited (DBL) was volume leader with 61,335 shares traded. Banks DIH Limited (DIH) traded 7,808 shares The LSI closed at 583.16.

Eastern Caribbean Securities Exchange (ECSE)

Market activity resulted from trading in 1 stock with a volume of 10,000 shares. TDC Limited was the sole trader with 10,000 shares traded. Index closed at 148.68.

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Business News In Brief

Farming a tax-free industry in Trinidad – 2020 Budget

T&T Finance Minister Colm Imbert presented a TT\$53.0B budget on October 7 under the theme 'Stability, Strength and Growth'. However, the budget only provides estimated revenues of \$47.749 B resulting in a fiscal deficit of \$5.287 B. The budget was based on a projected oil price of US\$60 and a gas price of US\$3 per MMBtu. The Minister also announced an increased investment tax credit for energy companies from 20% to 25% to stimulate exploration and development investment from Jan 1, 2020 and the removal of all taxes and duties on LED bulbs for five years. Other initiatives announced include: (a) Increase of minimum wage from \$15 to \$17.50 per hour from December 1, 2019, to benefit 194,000 persons; (b) Removal of all taxes and duties on all inputs for farmers and that farming is to become a tax-free industry; (c) \$3 billion in interest-bearing government bonds to registered VAT businesses to meet their VAT arrears. Tenure of 5 years and interest of 1.5% per annum. ([GuardianTT](#))

OECD releases new corporate tax-reform plan

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development on October 9, released a new proposal to advance the negotiation of a reformed global corporate tax system. The so-called "unified approach" contains elements of three competing models for tax reform aimed at taxing tech companies based on where their consumers are and where they generate their profits rather than where they are physically located. The proposal, which is now open to a public consultation process, would re-allocate some profits and corresponding taxing rights to countries and jurisdictions where multinational corporations market their products and services. This would ensure that multinationals can be taxed in jurisdictions where they conduct significant business but do not have a physical presence. The OECD aims to achieve this by creating new rules outlining where tax should be paid and determining what portion of profits should be taxed under new profit allocation rules. ([CC](#))

International Oil Prices as at October 11, 2019

Futures	Price	US\$ Change	Change
WTI Crude	US\$54.91	+1.05	+1.95
Brent Crude	US\$60.68	+1.15	+1.93
OPEC Basket	US\$58.71	+0.06	+0.10
Natural Gas	US\$2.22	+0.01	+0.77