The ‘West Indians First’ Policy

(Adopted by CWI December 2019; Fine-tuned August, 2020)

PREAMBLE

West Indies cricket, at its best, has always been a representation of the hopes and aspirations of the people of the Caribbean, and an illustration of the heights of excellence that our small Caribbean nations can attain when we work together. Cricket has been one of the few areas of our common West Indian culture and experiences, where together we have been able to punch above our weight, and achieve global excellence and recognition over a period of generations. That is why West Indies cricket has been aptly described as a ‘public good’ that belongs, at least emotionally, to all West Indian people no matter where we are located, across our region and the world.

When our cricket teams and gifted cricketers showcase their excellence and toughness on a world stage, we walk taller as a West Indian people. We beam with pride as we look at our own young West Indians face up with confidence, and God-given talent, to their adversaries and best competition from across our globe.

Sadly, the inverse occurs when our teams underperform, look unmotivated, or get badly beaten. The fans feel gravely let down, and our West Indian pride and spirit stagger in frustration. Our West Indies team being continuously lowly ranked on the ICC success ladder causes strong feelings of denial and embarrassment, and stakeholders are demanding explanations, solutions, and improved results.

THE POLICY

The ‘West Indians First’ policy is a timely call to action, designed to help change an organizational culture, through the empowerment of West Indian talent and production. Its main outputs must be an empowerment that leads to the best available creativity, effectiveness, and performance excellence. Transitioning and reorganizing for performance improvement must therefore take place strategically and speedily. At all levels and on all fronts, CWI must engage in a series of calculated moves designed to gain global competitiveness and reignite the passion for this new culture - A west Indian culture where our cricket and our pride must be where they belong, at the very center.

The policy therefore emphasizes beyond doubt that properly developing at the highest possible production and performance standards, and carefully exposing Caribbean talent and service expertise, is an absolute necessity for the future well-being of West Indies cricket and the satisfaction West Indian stakeholders everywhere. The policy also recognizes that the prerequisite for achieving international on-field success is organizational excellence off the field of play, on all fronts and at all levels.
THE POLICY ESSENTIALS:

a. Our cricket teams must therefore always be properly named “West Indies” (not ‘Windies’) in recognition of our rich West Indian history and cricket legacy, with respect for the West Indian Territorial Boards as shareholders of CWI, in tribute to all former West Indian players, and in full awareness of the emotional ownership of the teams by a wide variety of West Indian stakeholders including the fans of our players.

b. At the core of this West Indians First policy is the development and optimum utilization of regional expert skill and knowledge, of Caribbean origin where ever and whenever possible. Along with developing the best possible young cricketers, the other main output of this policy must be to generate and support the best quality coaching, umpiring, sports medicine, administration, and other cricket-related expertise and supplies of our region.

c. The West Indians First policy means no disrespect to the past or present use of foreign professionals or suppliers. It is not intended to be a West Indians ‘Only’ concept, and does not eliminate the possibility from time to time of a need for expertise of international origin. The new employment recruitment quota standard is a minimum of 3 out of every 5 members of the entire coaching and support staff, and not less than 80% of the total CWI full time work force should be of West Indian heritage.

d. This West Indians First policy enables CWI to employ the best international expertise where there is none of equal quality available of West Indian origin. But wherever there are foreign professionals employed within the CWI system, the policy also requires that there should be a medium to long term succession plan put in place for the transfer of skills, technology, and information.

e. This West Indians First policy also applies to the sourcing of procurement for all goods and services. Before deciding on a non-Caribbean vendor/supplier, the CWI procurement system should have searched for the best quality and most cost effective Caribbean suppliers, physically present in the Caribbean or located overseas with ownership of Caribbean origin. A practice of competitive bidding, including a strong regional component, must now become standardized.

CONCLUSION
All of CWI’s key cricket decisions must be designed to develop that sense of pride and aspiration for our representative West Indies teams that has been recently too often absent. In order to achieve a renewed sense of purpose and excellence within CWI, difficult choices and challenging decisions may have to be made.

This West Indians First policy will only be effective if it is properly and consistently implemented. The CWI Executive Management must therefore take ownership of this call to action, and the CWI Board must take responsibility for its utilization as a critically important policy, and make it happen. It is a necessary and timely policy which should make a major difference to the quality of the future output of West Indies cricket.