II DR GLOBAL FILM FESTIVAL 2008

Global Issues, Personal Stories

November 19-23, 2008 / *Santo Domingo, Santiago, Puerto Plata, Higüey, Nagua*

an initiative by
GFDD | FUNGLODE

The Dominican Republic at a Glance

Geography: Centrally located and the second largest island in the Caribbean, with prime air and sea access to the American and European Continents

Population: 9.4 million

Government: Representative Democracy with Executive, Legislative and Judicial Branches

Economy[1]***:*** GDP = $29 billion / GDP growth rate = 9.3 % (2005) 10.7% (2006) 8.2% (2007)

Consumer Goods imports from US = 70%

US imports market share = 60%

Bilateral Trade US/DR = $9.5 billion – 80% of manufactured goods enter the DR duty free

The Caribbean is the 3rd largest market for US exports, behind only Mexico and Brazil

The DR has the 7th largest ranking for US exports in the Western Hemisphere, after Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia and Chile.

Major Industries: Service Industry, Tourism, High-Tech Industry, Gold, Agriculture and Manufacturing.

Access & Transportation: 5 international airports and 7 major ports, including the megaport of Caucedo –the most advanced infrastructure in the Caribbean, which follows US Homeland Security rules and regulations

Preferential Trade Agreements: Access to ***816 million*** of consumers worldwide

North America: DR-CAFTA & CBTPA = 296 million

Caribbean: CARICOM = 30 million

Central & South America: RD-CAFTA = 40 million

European Union: COTONOU = 450 million



[1]Data obtained from the US Department of Commerce – US Commercial Services

DR DIGITAL CONTENT CREATION, ADVERTISEMENT AND MARKETING

For over two decades, the Dominican Republic has been garnering attention from the international cinematographic and television industries due to the country's central geographical location, well-preserved historical sites, architectural landscapes, and breathtaking and varied scenery, in addition to the economic advantages of producing and filming in the DR. One can appreciate a myriad of the island's prized locations in movies such as *Zombie* (1979), *The Serpent and the Rainbow* (1988), *Havana* (1990), and *Dance With Me* (1998). The government's effective efforts—of positioning the country as an ideal location for the cinematographic, videographic and television industries—have yielded further results. For instance, Hollywood producers, directors, and actors like Michael Mann, Robert De Niro, Andy Garcia, Angelina Jolie, Matt Damon, Randal Kleiser, Dustin Hoffman, Bill Murray, Robert Duvall, and Brett Ratner have recently traveled to the Dominican Republic to film. Recent productions which have been fully or partially shot in the country include *The Good Shepherd* (2006), *Miami Vice* (2006), *Paradise Lost* (2006), *The Lost City* (2005), *Lovewrecked* (2005), *Dreaming of Julia* (2003), *Hannibal the Conqueror* (2008), *Sugar* (2008) and *The Fast and the Furious 4* (2009). Films, TV programs, music videos, and commercials are part of this growing industry in the DR. According to the Internet Movie Database, almost 200 movies, documentaries, and television programs/series have been filmed in the DR. Although the list is not exhaustive, please view: *www.imdb.com* for further information.

On the national front, the DR is developing its own digital content creation industry and has recently produced films like *Nuebayol*, *Crimen*, *Enigma*, *La Cárcel de la Victoria*, and *Sanky Panky*, among others, which have been positively received by the public. Moreover, thousands of music videos and commercials are also produced each year; thus, the national industry is growing and offers great prospects

for the future. Dominican nationals are being trained in various aspects of the industry as well, and some of the leading training institutions involved in the preparation of the nation's human capital are: FUNGLODE/GFDD (through its program The Global Media Arts Institute) in association with Escuela Internacional de Cine y Televisión (EICTV) in Cuba, the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), the University of California Riverside (UCR) and the University of New York (NYU). Other programs training individuals in digital content creation are: Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo (UASD), Centro de Estudio en Comunicación Audiovisual (CENECA), GC Films Escuela de Cine, and Instituto Nacional de Formación Técnico Profesional (INFOTEP). In addition, the government of the DR established, in the year 2004, the National Directorate of Film (or DR Film Commission), which facilitates all aspects of digital content production in the country. For more information, including the 36 national films and documentaries that have been locally produced in the country since 1988, please view: www.dinac.gov.do.

THE DR GLOBAL FILM FESTIVAL

The DR Global Film Festival is the most important arts and culture event in the entire Caribbean and Central Americana region equated with creativity, unparalleled opportunities and emerging markets. The Festival is a supportive and propelling vehicle of both the national and international content creation industries. It is a project of the Fundación Global Democracia y Desarrollo (FUNGLODE) and its sister organization in the US, Global Foundation for Democracy and Development (GFDD), and has the full backing and support of the President of the Dominican Republic, Dr. Leonel Fernandez, and other principals at the highest levels of government and the country's social and economic structures. For more information on all aspects of the foundation, please browse, www.globalfoundationdd.org, and the highlights and glamour of a previous edition can be viewed at www.drglobalfilmfestival.org/index.asp (this website was one of the top four finalists for the prestigious Webby Awards).

The Festival plays a leading role in nurturing and enriching the Dominican film culture by bringing the cinema to a broad variety of audiences. The power of film on personal stories is universal, and the Festival is a clear catalyst for economic and social development, since it seeks to raise awareness and deepen understanding of global issues through stories about events and people that shape our world community. The festival utilizes film as a modern platform for the discussion of ideas about political, social, and economic issues, proposing solutions to pressing problems and promoting concepts of individual creativity and opportunity.

Previously, international luminaries such as Andy García, Emilio Estefan, Salma Hayek, Guillermo Navarro, Esther García and Francisco Quevedo have been among those present. The 2008 edition of the Festival will take place November 19-23, 2008, and it will once again bring together world-renowned local and international filmmakers, producers, talented artists and industry leaders with the purpose of cultivating an appreciation for the art of cinema and promoting digital content creation in the DR. Another goal of the Festival is to demonstrate the multifaceted cultural, historical and geographical riches, as well as the many economic incentives, that the country has to offer to the industry, and through the development of this field in the DR, contribute to the country's economic growth.

Unlike other similar events, the Festival is celebrated in multiple venues throughout the entire country, which guarantees maximum exposure and access. The Festival has six different venues in the City of Santo Domingo, and additional ones in the cities of Santiago, Puerto Plata, Nagua and Higüey, for a total of ten. Currently, thirty-two films have been confirmed and up to forty are expected to be screened.

As a part of the Festival's program, a number of social and educational activities will create opportunities for networking, the learning and sharing of ideas, and for the development and strengthening of relationships. After the gala opening night, workshops and discussion panels with directors, actors, filmmakers and industry leaders will follow. A turnout of more than 100,000 people, with a high participation of high-school and university students, is expected.

PREFERENCES & INCENTIVES FOR FOREIGN INVESTMENT AND BUSINESSES

The Dominican Republic has demonstrated its ascending trajectory throughout the world stage. In fact, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Executive Board Report, dated May 10, 2006, the policies implemented by the government have led to "remarkable improvements," which have increased the nation's competitiveness throughout the world markets. Current laws and policies provide multiple incentives and protections to international companies and organizations, which have placed the DR as the leading service industry and high-technological center in the region, with excellent opportunities for investment, business development and high-value exports. In addition, due to its central geographical location and close proximity to the continental US (both geographical and cultural), the DR offers demonstrable financial advantages such as decreased operational and transportation costs, and reliable connectivity to the American and European continents. It

also offers a well-trained, multilingual, and cost-competitive workforce, and developed technological and physical infrastructures.

Historically, the Dominican Republic has foster foreign investments by creating free trade zones and granting preferred fiscal advantages and infrastructure development. Foreign investment in the DR is regulated by law no. 16-95, which grants foreign and national investors the same legal status as Dominican entities and also permits the full recovery of capital and earnings. The DR is a member of the World Commerce Organization (WCO) and it is assigned to the COTONOU convention (European Union commercial trade and development cooperation agreements). The country has also amplified its markets by signing various free trade agreements, which grant access to 816 million consumers worldwide, and by expanding its business infrastructure. More than 80% of US manufactured goods enter the DR duty free. Finally, the Cybernetic Park Santo Domingo (PCSD) is a modern technological and business complex and a clear example of the governmental support that provides the necessary platform to establish operations near the US shore. Further information on the cybernetic park can be viewed at: http://pcsd.com.do.

SOME OF THE INCENTIVES FOR FOREIGN INVESTMENT AND BUSINESS ARE:

- Free Trade Zones for manufacturers of goods and services for exports, with especial regiments of customs controls and rights, exonerations, fiscal incentives of up to 100% in various taxes and tariffs, and more.
- Full or partial exoneration on imports of motor vehicles, personal belongings, furnishings, etc.
- Tax exemptions for sectors that conduct business activities in the cybernetic park.
- Full tax exemptions and other great incentives for companies and individuals involved in the production of energy and alternative energy sources.
- Dominican residency, with all of its rights and privileges, to foreigners who make a considerable investment in the DR.
- Various incentives and protections, including tax exemptions and cost exonerations, to companies involved in digital content creation, with the aim of not only establishing the DR as the ideal location for the cinematographic and videographic industries, but also continuing the national development of this industry by facilitating and stimulating imports of production materials, equipment, knowledge and technologies.
- The creation of FONPROCINE, a fund established to promote cinematographic and audiovisual activity in the country.

THE FUTURE

The President of the Dominican Republic, Dr. Leonel Fernández, and his cabinet are committed to the continuous development of the audiovisual and digital content creation industries in the nation, and have made this commitment one of the top priorities in the country's domestic agenda. This includes establishing all the legal, commercial, and training frameworks that facilitate this important goal. The future is now, and the country's doors are wide open. The Dominican Republic is poised to become the next sensation in the production and film industries at a global scale. The United States has Hollywood, India has Bollywood and the Dominican Republic is creating Dollywood.

(Note: Currently, the Film Law of the Dominican Republic has been approved by the DR Senate and is in the process of ratification in the DR House of Representatives).