

**NATIONAL FORUM 2019:  
STANDARDS FACILITATING TRADE**  
Ballroom, Breezes Superclubs  
Program Agenda

8:00 am **Registration**

9:00 am Opening, Welcome & Introductions  
DR RENAE BUFFORD,  
Executive Director, Bahamas  
Bureau of Standards & Quality  
(BBSQ)

**Brief Remarks** by  
AARON BRICE,  
Chairman, BBSQ

**Remarks** by  
REGINALD SAUNDERS,  
Permanent Secretary (Acting)  
Ministry Of Labour who represents  
Sen Hon Dion Foulkes,  
Minister of Labour

9:20 am **Introduction of Zhivargo  
Laing, Chief Negotiator, WTO  
Executive Director and  
Senior Policy Fellow of the  
Government and Public  
Policy Institute**, by  
REGINALD SAUNDERS,  
Permanent Secretary (Acting),  
Ministry Of Labour

**Bahamas WTO Update**  
ZHIVARGO LAING,  
Chief Negotiator, WTO Executive  
Director and Senior Policy Fellow of  
the Government and Public Policy  
Institute

10:00 am **Moderator**,  
DR RENAE BUFFORD,  
Executive Director, Bahamas  
Bureau of Standards & Quality  
(BBSQ)

**Introduction Hema Menon,  
Trade Training Officer,  
Export  
Quality Management,  
International Trade Centre  
(ITC)**

TEA/COFFEE BREAK

10:30 am **Overview WTO and NTMs**,  
LAURO LOCKS  
(WTO)

11:00 am **Overview TBT Agreement  
and TBT Committee:  
principles, practices and  
dispute-prevention**,  
LAURO LOCKS  
(WTO)

12:30 am **TBT transparency tools:  
helping to overcome  
technical barriers to trade  
(ePing)**,  
GERGANA KISKINOVA  
(WTO)

1:00 pm **Q & A “International  
Standards and the Impact on  
Trade & Industry”**  
HEMA MENON  
(ITC),  
LAURO LOCKS,  
(WTO) and  
GERGANA KISKINOVA  
(WTO)

1:30 pm **Closing Remarks -**  
MR. HUEL ROBINS  
Vice Chairman, BBSQ

# SPEAKERS

## Aaron Brice

Currently serving as Chairman of the Board of Bahamas Bureau of Standards & Quality, Aaron Brice is founder, owner and chief executive officer of Epic Battery & Tire Limited, which operates from locations on the islands of New Providence, Grand Bahama and Abaco. In pursuit of the highest quality of products and service he has traveled to factories and smelters in China, The United States, El Salvador and Venezuela.

His work experiences have included marketing and broadcasting with Bahamas Broadcasting Corporation; engagement with Bahamas Oil Refinery as Oil Operator, involved in Fractionation/Refining & Testing. He also spent time at Pannell Kerr Forster Chartered Accountants as an Audit Junior.

Highly active in community development, Aaron Brice is a member of the Bahamas China Friendship Association and the Bahamas Light Industry Development Council. He is a former Board Member of the Price Control Commission and the Bahamas Chamber of Commerce.

## Hema Menon

HEMA MENON is Trade Training Officer at the International Trade Centre (ITC) with more than 20 years of experience in trade development. She has a Masters' degree in Arts and Bachelors' degree in Botany from the University of Delhi, India. Her present work in Export Quality Management involves designing and implementing interactive training programmes related to quality, standards, technical regulations, food safety and hygiene measures within different ITC projects. As part of her work, she has led the development and publication of numerous tools, guides and sensitization materials intended to demystify technically complex areas, in order to reinforce trade support institution (TSIs) to assist small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in meeting technical requirements in foreign markets.

## Lauro Locks

LAURO LOCKS has been working at the Secretariat of the World Trade Organization (WTO), located in Geneva, Switzerland, since 2002. He is currently Counsellor at the WTO's Trade and Environment Division, where he provides legal and policy assistance mainly with respect to matters related to the TBT Agreement – the WTO Agreement disciplining technical barriers to trade (product standards and technical regulations, and conformity assessment procedures). His work includes assisting the TBT Committee (the WTO body in charge of administering the TBT Agreement), liaising

with WTO members' governments and agencies as well as other IGOs and stakeholders on TBT related matters. He also assists WTO "panels" (adjudicators) in charge of disputes involving TBT matters. Previously, Mr. Locks was Counsellor at the WTO's Legal Affairs Division, where he provided legal advice in the context of trade disputes about measures covering various matters, such as technical barriers, tariff classification, or intellectual property (trademarks, geographical indications). He was also Counsellor at the WTO's Intellectual Property Division. Mr. Locks, a dual Brazilian-Swiss citizen, earned a Bachelor of laws degree (LL.B.) from the Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil, a Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy (M.A.L.D.) from the Fletcher School of Tufts University, Boston, USA, and a Master of Laws degree (LL.M.) in intellectual property law from the George Washington University's Law School, Washington, DC, USA. After completing his LL.B., Mr. Locks served for five and a half years as a senior legal officer at the Santa Catarina State High Court in Brazil. Mr. Locks was subsequently an associate attorney at an intellectual property law firm in Rio de Janeiro, and later an International Trade Advisor at a law firm in Washington, DC.

### **Gergana Kiskinova**

GERGANA KISKINOVA is a Project Officer in the Trade and Environment Division of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Her main responsibility is to manage the SPS/TBT notification alert system ePing, which assists a broad range of stakeholders to keep track of evolving product requirements in export markets. She has been involved in the formulation of enhancements to the ePing system as well as in technical assistance and promotion activities. She has also delivered training on ePing as part of capacity building programmes run by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). Prior to joining the WTO, she worked in the Corporate Affairs department of Pernod Ricard Asia, Hong Kong where her tasks involved monitoring of regulatory developments affecting alcohol products, food safety, consumer protection including through TBT and SPS notifications. Gergana is fluent in French, English, Bulgarian and Russian.

### **Dr. Renae L. Bufford, Ph.D.**

Dr. Renae L. Bufford, Ph.D. Dr. Renae L. Bufford has been the Director of Bahamas Bureau of Standards and Quality (BBSQ) since its inception in 2013. Charged with the responsibility of developing this vital national agency, she guided the Bureau through its embryonic stages, resulting in 2016 in the official launch of its national quality infrastructure services in standards, metrology and conformity assessments. During the past five years, the BBSQ has grown tremendously under her leadership. She is a visionary, whose passion, dedication and commitment have contributed to The Bahamas' emergence as a key regional participant. Dr. Bufford has forged important partnerships at both the regional and international levels. In October 2017, she

was elected Council Chairperson of the CARICOM Regional Organization for Standards and Quality (CROSQ). As the BBSQ Director and CROSQ Chair, Dr. Bufford is determined to continue to use her passion and drive to promote the significance of the international Quality Infrastructure agenda and to position The Bahamas to continue its involvement in a meaningful way.

## Zhivargo Laing

ZHIVARGO LAING Chief Negotiator for the Bahamas Accession to the World Trade Organization Zhivargo Laing is a Bahamian business consultant, and a director on the board of a number of companies, including Caystone Solutions Ltd. In September 2018, the Government of The Bahamas appointed him to lead the country's negotiation team for accession to World Trade Organization (WTO) membership. Additionally, he leads the Government and Public Policy Institute at the University of the Bahamas Mr Laing is a former Minister of Economic Development and Minister of Finance in The Bahamas. During his tenure, he led the government's policy efforts in the areas of financial services, international trade, foreign investment and e-government development for some ten years. During the Great Recession of 2008, he was responsible for leading the country's fiscal stimulus programme, developing the country's 24/7 E-government platform, laying the foundation for the country's small and medium size business development legislation, and re-engineering the country's business license and fiscal reform regime. Mr Laing's work with the Bahamas Financial Services Board help to craft the country's strategic direction for the industry. He was also the lead policy negotiator on the country's response to a number of international regulatory developments impacting the financial services sector. As an expert on the Bahamian economy, government operations and conducting business within The Bahamas, Zhivargo now provides international investors with advice and logistical support for investing in The Bahamas. He hosts Z Live: Off The Record with Zhivargo Laing, which airs daily on Guardian Radio, 96.9FM and has authored several books, including College, Career and Money – A Guide for Teens and Young Adults (with David Burrows) and Who Moved My Conch – Understanding Free Trade Agreements. A graduate of the University of Western Ontario, with graduate studies at The George Washington University and the Robert Kennedy College/University of Cumbria School of Business, Zhivargo Laing's training is in economics, finance, business and leadership.